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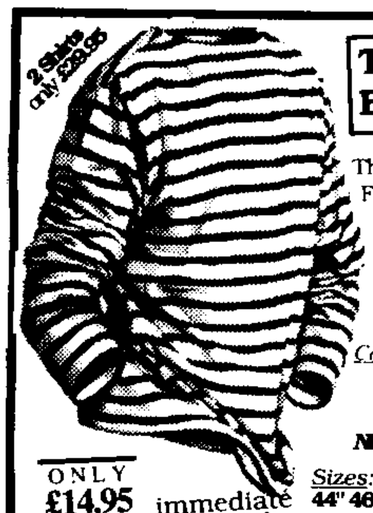

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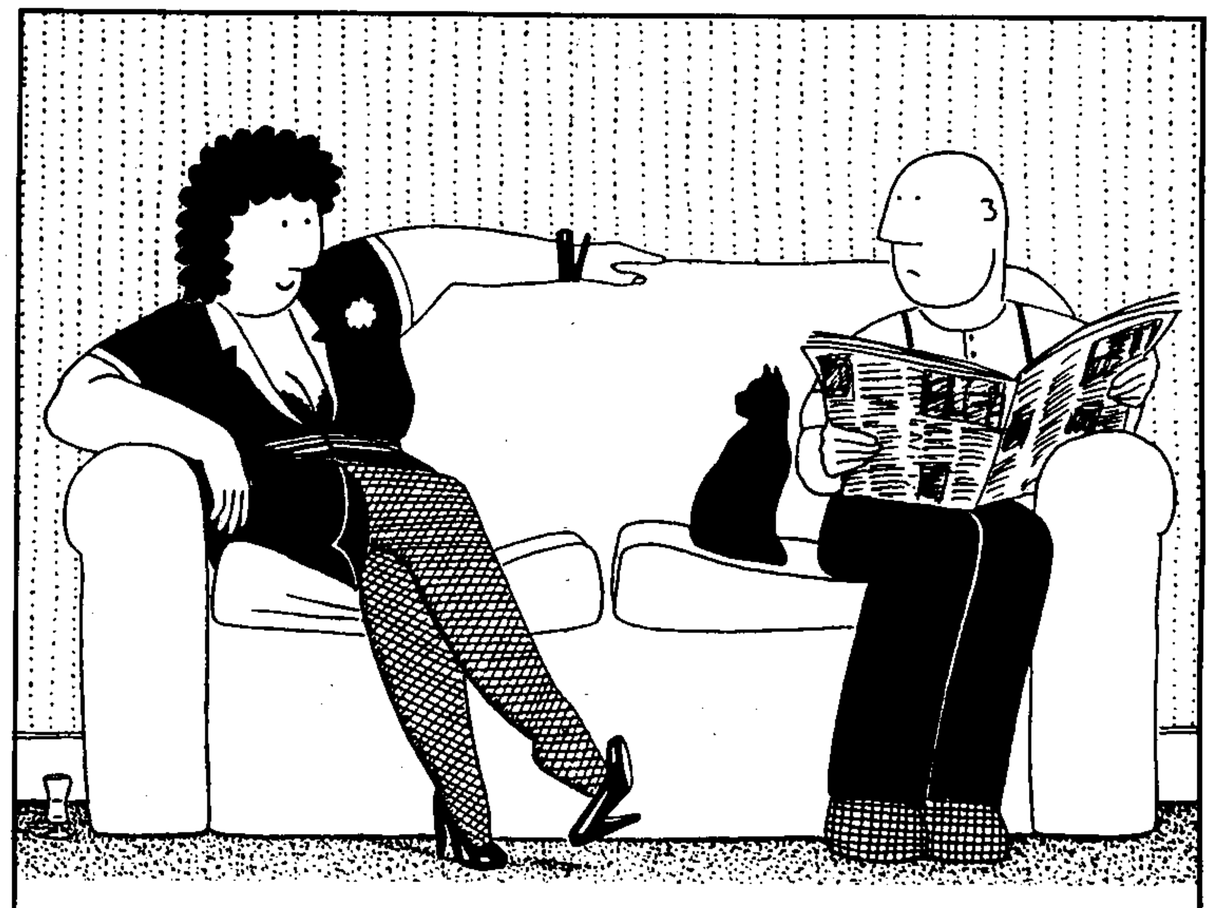

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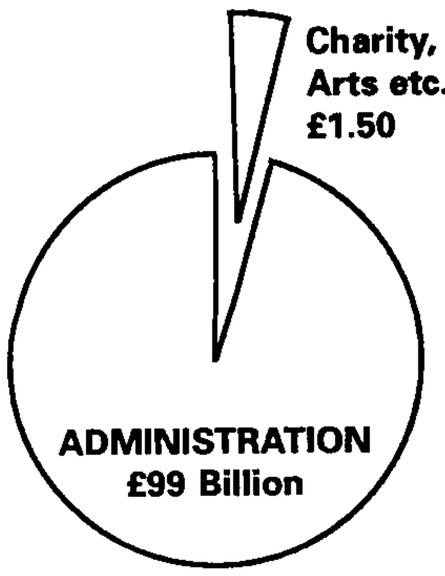

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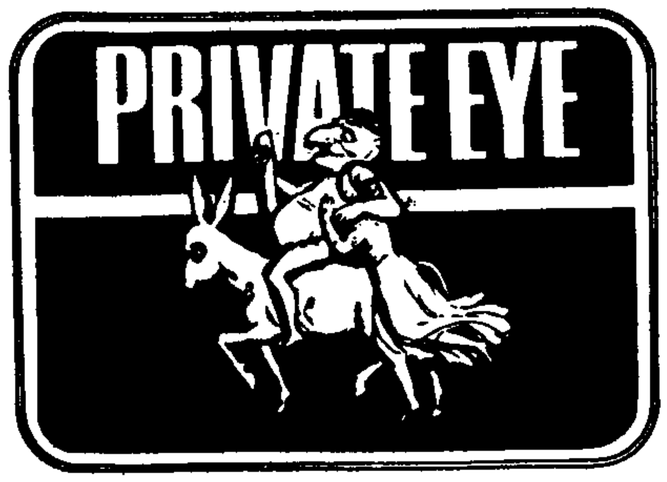


COLOUR SECTION

BALFOUR BEATTY, joint leader of the Thatcher government's infamous £397 million Pergau dam project in Malaysia, is now also facing investigations closer to home. It has just admitted paying £120,000, for no apparent gain, into an abortive building scheme run by a former Labour politician whose local party handed the company a £50 million construction deal in the mid-1980s.

The company's great rival, John Mowlem & Co, has been smarting for years since losing the Preston Dock redevelopment scheme to Balfour Beatty at the eleventh hour in 1983. Mowlem had spent years on the project, being selected from 10 builders and offering an immediate payment of £500,000 without strings to Preston council, which would then have shared in future revenue. Its Riversway scheme was to have been primed by £12 million of government money, in the form of a special Derelict Land Grant.

In a report recommending the plan, international real estate consultants Debenham, Tewson and Chinnocks told the Preston town clerk: "At no stage do Mowlem envisage realising a developer's profit; rather their submission was made on the basis that their return would be in the form of a contractor's profit."

The plan seemed likely to go through. But at the last minute another bidder latched on to the partly government-funded project. This was a consortium known as NEDA/LEL, which included Balfour Beatty and retained our old chums N.M. Rothschild as financial advisers.

"We consider," the consultants advised, "that Mowlem's proposals have a degree of certainty which contrasts strongly with the great uncertainty associated with the outlines presently available from NEDA/LEL. We strongly advise against any further negotiations with NEDA/LEL." But within a few days, the town's ruling Labour group — opposed by Tories and Liberals — voted to scrap the Mowlem deal and open negotiations with NEDA/LEL.

This delayed construction for two years. The consultants resigned immediately, presenting an £80,000 bill for their unheeded advice. The council's officers insisted on a written record of their opposition to the new Labour policy. Five months later the NEDA/LEL consortium collapsed, allowing Balfour Beatty to come forward as sole and unopposed developers.

By the early morning of 7 August 1991, when the Lancashire police fraud squad raided Preston town hall and the homes of prominent councillors and officials, in an investigation known as "Operation Angel", Labour's deputy leader Frank McGrath had become a millionaire property developer in his own right. He explained to the *Lancashire Evening Post* that his wealth had been based on a £600 investment in the radio empire of his friend Owen Oyston, the exotic socialist tycoon.

Last year Frank McGrath was twice arrested after an Operation Angel raid on the offices of Balfour Beatty. The police had traced a payment from Balfour Beatty, via the Isle of Man, to an abortive McGrath scheme to build flats on the seafront at Blackpool. Last December, however, the attorney-general, Sir Nicholas Lyell, personally intervened to prevent the Crown Prosecution Service from charging Frank McGrath with corruptly receiving money from Balfour Beatty.

The company has since admitted putting £125,000 into a joint venture with McGrath in 1990. A Balfour Beatty spokesman told *Construction News* last week: "I'm not sure whether we got anything back or not."

The Balfour Beatty deal is now to be investigated by a special review team at Preston town hall, led by two accountants hired on one-year contracts. We await their findings with interest.

ALARMING new facts have emerged concerning Charles Barker Ltd, the PR and lobbying outfit that went bust last year owing £13 million and leaving 300 creditors in the lurch.

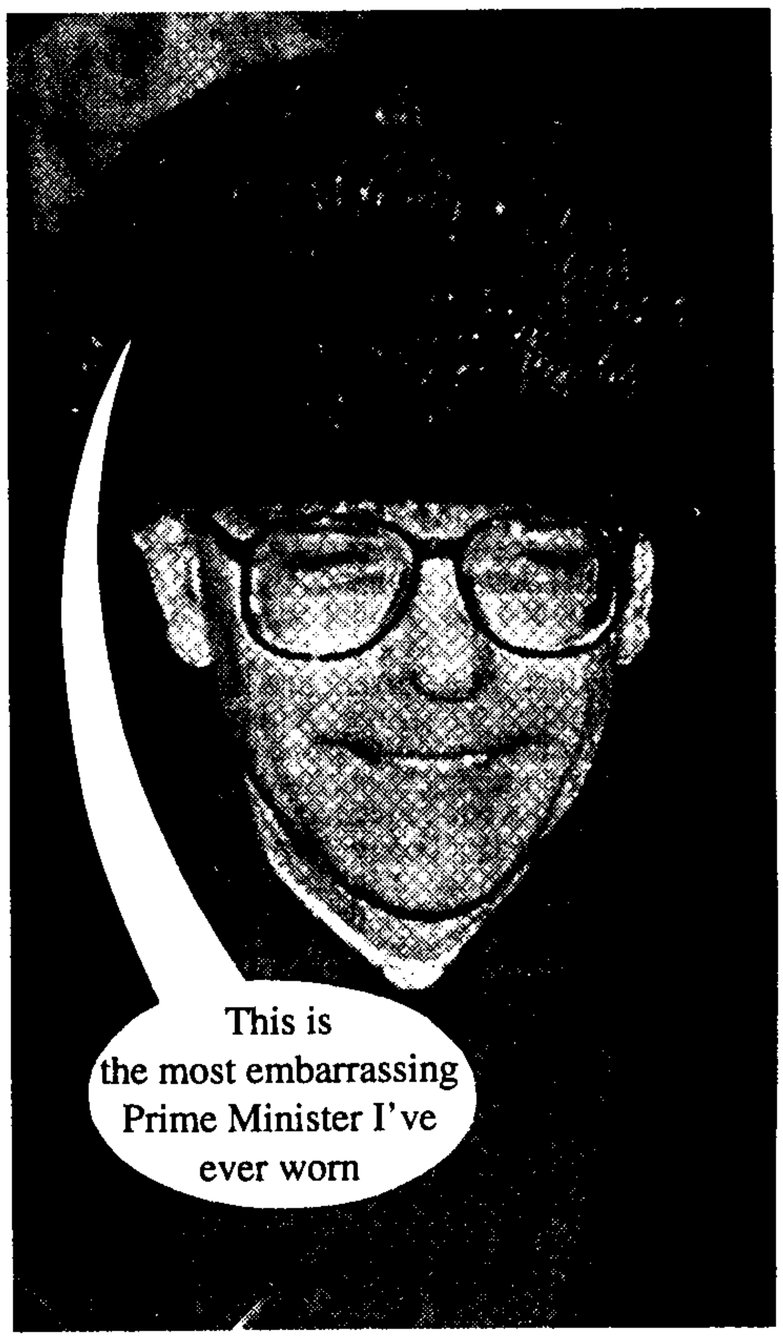
Its directors, including citizen's charter group member Angela Heylin, were allowed to buy back the company for a mere £107,000 and start again — with no obligation to pay deserted creditors, the very people the citizen's charter group is supposed to help (see *Eyes passim*).

The *Eye* can reveal that one of the creditors was the British taxpayer — via HMSO, the government's stationery office.

So how did Heylin land her new job? John Major was warned about the Charles Barker rip-off, but ignored the warnings and then confirmed her appointment.

Michael Heseltine, president of the board of trade, also has a lot to answer for. The world of hype was scandalised by the Charles Barker affair, and many in the industry asked for a DTI inquiry. Hezza refused point-blank — much to the relief, no doubt, of his long-time close friend Evie Soames, Charles Barker's md and the person who benefited most from the buy-back.

HAT SPEAKS OUT



WHILE Tory MPs have accused the police of leaking details of Tory MP Stephen Milligan's death and Labour MPs have blamed government whips, former policeman John "Roscoe" Ross has been boasting that it was he who tipped off Sky News and the *Sun*.

Ross left Scotland Yard soon after he and his brother were acquitted at the Old Bailey of planting a shotgun on a villain. Thereafter he became a conduit between his old mates in the Met and various Fleet Street crime correspondents, with a police press pass courtesy of the *News of the Screws* newsdesk.

A couple of days after the Milligan story broke, Ross hosted a party for *Daily Express* crime correspondent John Twomey at the Wine Press in Fleet Street. The entertainment included a highly predictable strip-o-gram WPC, but an even greater treat was in store. Ross himself came dressed as a "mystery guest": stripped to the waist with a black plastic bag over his head and an orange in his mouth.

FOLLOWING the mountain rescue of Jacqueline Greaves, *Daily Torygraph* readers were doubtless amused by Matt's front-page pocket cartoon showing an injured climber saying to a dog: "Quick, Lassie, go and sell my story to the tabloids".

This implied that proper broadsheet papers — like the *Daily Torygraph*, for example — would never stoop to such tricks. But what readers might not have known was that the *Torygraph*'s new recruit from the *Daily Mail*, Sue Ryan, had indeed bid for Jacqueline Greaves's story. The problem was that she only offered £25,000.

Presumably, there will be no editorial leaders condemning chequebook journalism in the near future.

AS THE rival bidders for the *Indescribably-boring* search for Carlo Pagani, the shadowy investor who last week spent £1.75 million buying a crucial 2.36 per cent share which could give David Montgomery and Mirror Group Newspapers victory in their takeover battle with Tony O'Reilly, another important shareholder has chosen this moment to leave the country.

Matthew Symonds, joint founder of the *Independent*, was said last week to be staying in a £200-a-night hotel in Marrakesh, recovering from the mysterious bout of "pneumonia" which, so he claims, he contracted after falling off a horse while carrying a gun.

Symonds, the paper's deputy editor, has not been seen at the paper's office this year, and puzzled hacks are wondering whether it isn't time for him to seek a second opinion.

JOCELYN "Miss" Targett, the boy wonder hired by Associated Newspapers last autumn to launch the *Mail on Sunday*'s "Night and Day" section, has a new nickname in the office. He is now known as "Missed" Targett, in recognition of the fact that his supplement has missed all its target readers.

Targett, who enjoys a lavish salary and a chauffeur-driven car, has spent a fortune on recruiting his freelance chums (not to mention his own wife, Judy Rumbold) as contributors to "Night and Day". In spite of this vast investment, sales of the *Mail on Sunday* have plummeted. And the *Daily Mail*'s new Saturday section, launched at the same time for a fraction of the cost, has added 200,000 to the daily paper's weekend sales. The Sunday paper's circulation, which has slumped below two million, has now been overtaken by its daily stablemate.

Clearly Sir David English, chairman of Associated Newspapers, ought to intervene to stop the rot. But there is a problem. For the man responsible for this expensive cock-up is the selfsame Sir David English. He hired Targett last year over the head of the *MoS*'s nominal editor, Jonathan Holborow, and it was English, lest we forget, who was also responsible for the catastrophic revamp of the *Mo*'s colour magazine, *You*, a couple of years ago.

Nevertheless, English did not get where he is today without being able to execute a brazen u-turn when it suits him. Few executives at Associated Newspapers are prepared to bet on Targett surviving beyond the summer.

UNDERGRADUATE hacks at *London Student*, the university newspaper where Tory MP Hartley Booth's "good friend" Emily Barr works, have been given an educational glimpse of the competence of their "professional" counterparts.

Fleet Street's finest descended on the paper's Students' Union offices as soon as the story of la Barr's liaison with Booth broke. Alas, they were too stupid to see what was staring them in the face.

Both Robert Kellaway of the *Sun* and Steve Atkinson of the *Mirror* managed to obtain copies of the current edition — a brilliant coup given that it is distributed free all over London. But neither had the wit to notice that Booth himself was quoted extensively in a centre-page article on the criminal justice bill.

Darrell Lyons of the *Mail* caused much hilarity by claiming to be "a close friend of Emily": *London Student* recently published a story about what a "slimy git" she thinks he is.

The meejah's efforts to get into the university building where the offices are housed by pretending to be students also provoked incredulous amusement: none of them seemed to realise that students do not, on the whole, wear trenchcoats or carry mobile phones.

GIVEN the long history of sectarian tension between Glasgow's two most famous football teams, Rangers (Protestant) and Celtic (Catholic), eyebrows are being raised at the appointment of Kevin McKenna as sports editor on *Scotland on Sunday*.

Can this be the same Kevin McKenna who in October 1989, while editor of Celtic FC's official journal *Celtic View*, declared that Protestants were "low-lifes" who "bred illegitimate children like rabbits"? And who added, for good measure, that

"He's sold the story for forty grand to Mother Goose"

the killing of 11 civilians at Enniskillen's Cenotaph was "a legitimate act of war" by the Provisional IRA, thus provoking a splash story in the Scottish edition of the *Sun* headed CELTIC CRACKPOT BACKS VILE IRA MURDERERS? Indeed it could.

McKenna assured the *Eye* last week that he had never been pro-IRA. "I was basically severely misquoted," he explained. "Certain comments that were intended as a wind-up were taken the wrong way by certain parties." How odd, then, that when the *Sun* challenged him about the story in 1989 he admitted that he had indeed made the comments.

McKenna also told us that he had no views whatsoever on Ireland, or even any knowledge of it. It would be "preposterous" to suggest otherwise. Strange, then, that while he was at university McKenna was a member of the Troops Out movement, and that he is a regular contributor to a Catholic paper in Belfast, the *Irish News*.

Some readers of *Scotland on Sunday* have already protested to the editor about McKenna's appointment. His presence certainly seems unlikely to increase sales of the paper among Rangers supporters — of whom, it is believed, there are a good many in Glasgow.

THE latest exemplar of a great Fleet Street tradition is George Birrell, sacked as editor of the Scottish *Daily Express* for "misconduct" — ie embezzlement — after 22 years with the rag.

After a two-month investigation, the company dispensed with his services and called in the fraud squad. Two London executives of the *Daily Express*, deputy editor Paul Potts and managing editor Mike Dean, went to Scotland to administer the *coup de grace*.

Officially, the amount in question is £4,400 over two years. But internal estimates are that Birrell got away with £70,000 over the years. Not only was he paying alimony to his first wife directly out of company funds, but a girlfriend was being paid £1,000 a time for stories through an Edinburgh news agency Birrell had set up, with some of this money being diverted back to him.

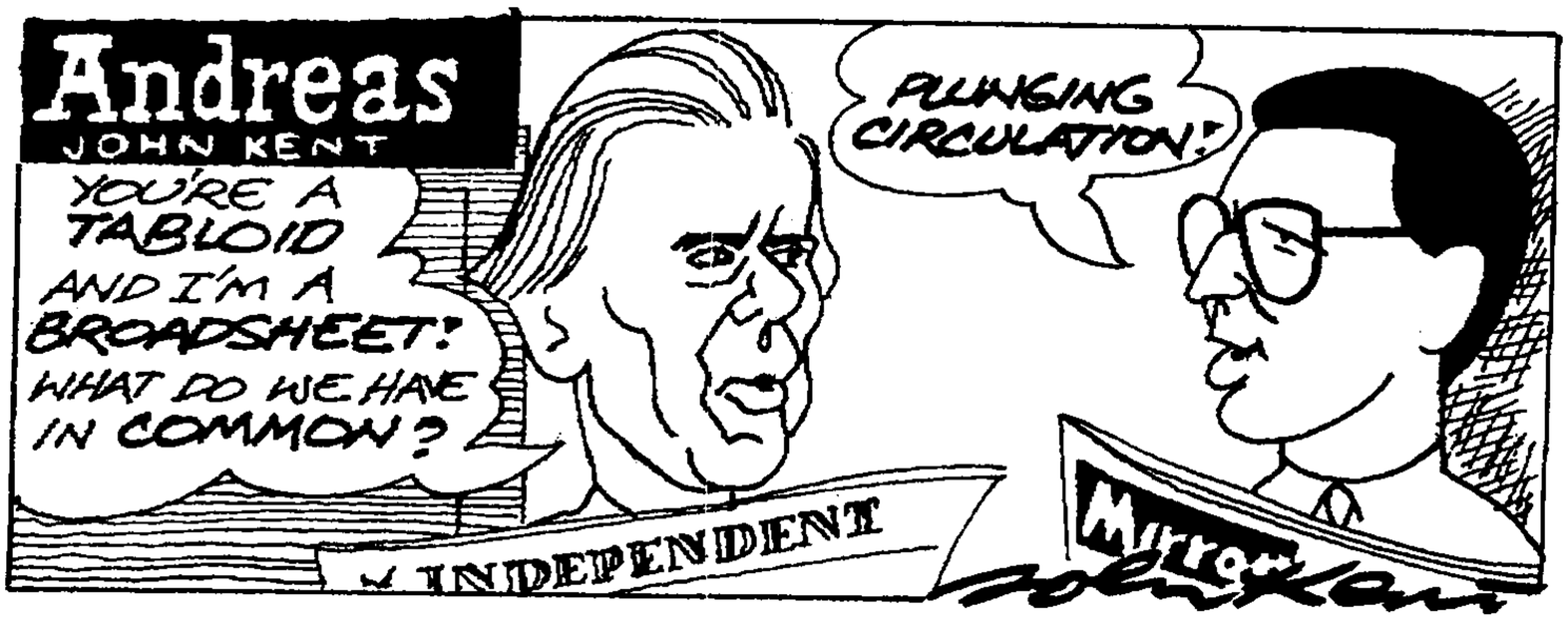
Express Newspapers is not the only organisation likely to be embarrassed by this scandal. Birrell has put himself forward on radio and TV as an apologist for the Conservative party, and has in the past organised lavish dinners and hand-kissing functions for both John Major and Margaret Thatcher.

THE *Daily Mirror* ignored a story lapped up by the other tabloids — namely the home secretary's decision to increase fines for possession of marijuana. Why?

Possibly from its desire to avoid an unseemly accusation of partiality, since Mirror Group political editor David Seymour, in an earlier phase at the *Daily Mirror*, used to shut himself in the rarely occupied office of his then boss Joe Haines for an inspiring toke or three.

The *Daily Mirror*'s editorial on Valentine's Day, meanwhile, which followed the *Sunday Mirror*'s revelations of Tory MP Hartley Booth's non-bonking of student hackette Emily Barr, referred to the "two-faced, shabby bunch of alley cats" sitting on the Conservative benches.

Senior figures at Mirror Group Newspapers — such as the publisher David Montgomery who fathered a love-child by ex-*News of the Screws* Sharon Feinstein while he was her editor there — are of course exempt from this description.



WHILE baked-bean baron Tony O'Reilly has still not managed to take over the *Indescribablyboring*, he is enjoying more success elsewhere in his attempts to become an international press tycoon. Having bought a controlling stake in Argus Newspapers, South Africa's largest newspaper group, he will become the most powerful figure in the South African press.

As South Africa struggles to develop a democratic society, the danger is that it will simply exchange a *de facto* one-party state run by the National Party for a one-party state run by the ANC. Clearly the press, which has always been surprisingly independent, will have an important role in keeping pluralism alive. But how likely is that now?

O'Reilly's main adviser on matters South African is Dr van Zyl Slabbert, sociology lecturer, failed politician and ANC brown-noser. When appointed by De Klerk as chairman of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, Slabbert promptly withdrew when told by the ANC it was not the Will of the People.

He is no doubt destined for high office in O'Reilly's African empire, along with sundry ANC hacks. The Johannesburg *Star* is already basically pro-ANC, but the biggest black newspaper, *The Sowetan*, is more into "Black Consciousness". No doubt this deviation from the party line will soon be dealt with firmly.

There will remain the problem of subduing the country's second largest newspaper group, Times Media; but great progress is already being made. Earlier this month ANC grandees refused to have lunch with Times Media's management unless the editor of its flagship *Financial Mail* was excluded. (The London *Financial Times*, reporting this in its diary column, treated it as a huge joke. Had it been a case of John Major refusing to lunch with the Pearson management unless *FT* editor Richard Lambert was barred from the room, perhaps the Pink 'Un might have taken this political bullying more seriously.)

These latest developments must be deeply distressing to Tiny Rowland, who had been planning to launch a pro-ANC daily in Johannesburg. With O'Reilly and his ANC chums on the scene, and Times Media showing such gutlessness, Tiny is clearly surplus to requirements.

LEGAL NEWS

JONATHAN GOLDBERG QC, who defended disgraced businessman Roger Levitt, has been asked to responded to a complaint to the Bar Council by David Cocks QC, who led the Levitt prosecution for the Crown.

In essence, Cocks has complained that in his opening speech Goldberg wilfully misled the jury about his client's motives. Cocks also criticised the trial judge for meting out such a trifling sentence (180 hours of community service) when he knew full well that the plea-bargain deal which he had agreed with Goldberg depended on the judge indicating that he would give Levitt a non-custodial sentence.

Goldberg has stated in his response that Cocks both made his complaint and attacked the trial judge in order to obscure his own conduct of the case — for example, his failure to appeal the preparatory applications on behalf of Levitt.

Meanwhile Cocks has been interviewed for a Channel 4 documentary about the serious fraud office, and eager eyes at the Bar will be looking to see if he attacks the trial judge again for issuing a sentence which was in fact the result of a carve-up between counsel in the judge's room.

Downing Street said last night it had no knowledge of this latest scandal to hit the government, the eigth since the 1092 general election.

The Sunday Times

HALLO!

The new heartwarming column

HALLO! *HOPING to hear serious political debate amid the foul sniping following the death of Tory MP Stephen Milligan, Hallo! travelled to Exeter University to hear a talk by Patrick Nicholls, the MP for Teignbridge and vice chairman of the Conservative party.*

While Labour was criticised for campaigning in Milligan's Eastleigh constituency before arrangements were made for his funeral, the poster advertising Mr Nicholls' talk, er, fair took our breath away.

GET OUT OF YOUR STOCKINGS, PUT DOWN THAT CITRUS FRUIT, COMING SOON, PATRICK NICHOLLS MP *it screamed, above a cruel caricature of a man in some discomfort. Heaven help us if the student Conservatives of today become the brigands, syphilitics and junior ministers of tomorrow.*

As the party's great moralist Geoffrey Dickens told his local paper with typical delicacy, the sex scandals "all come at once with one big bang".

HALLO! PARIS in the springtime beckons for lucky Robert Priddle, the game civil servant who is taking up a luxurious new job as executive director of the International Energy Agency in the French capital.

This glamorous posting is a long way from the nitty gritty of British energy policy — and no doubt a further reward for the horrid flak he took over the now notorious coal pits closure plan.

We can reveal that Michael Heseltine and Tim Eggar, grateful colleagues of Mr Priddle at the department of trade and industry, have clubbed together to buy him a go away present — a fine beret and Breton fisherman's smock.

They are very grateful, for without his protection they would have been well and truly *dans la merde.*

HALLO! THE hugely talented Chris Evans staged an amusing contest on his late night TV show *Don't Forget Your Toothbrush* when he asked the studio audience when they had last made love.

The couple who had not achieved congress since last September were packed off to a luxury London hotel for the evening — with a copy of the *Baywatch* video. "It always works for me," quipped Chris, in a cheeky reference to his own purported taste for DIY on a Saturday afternoon.

When rewarding the couple who had "done it" most recently, there was speculation that Evans might give the prize to himself and hostess Rachel who regularly slope off during rehearsals for a spot of traditional light entertainment of their own.

"Either you stop not-drinking or we're finished together"

HALLO! INTOXICATED by the scent of steaming horse flesh, Hallo! puts on its green wellingtons and follows the hunt. Imagine our disgust when we read the following report of our West Country outing in the pukka *Horse and Hound* magazine.

"Exmoor. It was a warm, sunny morning when the bitches came to Simonsbath Bridge. People were delighted to see Lady Arran mounted." (*What does this mean? The Marquesa.*)

HALLO! *WHY IS the energetic Conrad Black, proprietor of the Telegraph titles, always to be seen with an enormous smile on his face?*

According to Paul Johnson, the leading Catholic moralist who abhors gossip and licentious rumour, Conrad's adorable wife, Barbara Amiel, has the answer.

Johnson claims that his fellow Catholic benefits hugely from a piece of ancient Chinese wisdom Barbara acquired in Hong Kong a few years ago.

And what is the secret? "The main one," Johnson confides — in a friendly, not smutty sense, of course — "involves two marbles... It has been responsible for Conrad's awakening."

HALLO! WE ARE delighted to report that Lord Rothermere has been spared embarrassment — a silly piece of tittle tattle in the gutter press — thanks to the devotion of his butler, Sir David English.

Sir David, who has been ironing Lord Rothermere's Associated Newspapers man and boy, heard a rumour that someone called Ross Benson was planning to run a fanciful story in the *Daily Express* concerning the father-in-law of Lord Rothermere's son, Jonathan.

Jonathan married Claudia Clemence last year, and Jonathan's late mother, Bubbles, was disturbed that her son was marrying "trade", since Mr Clemence is a purveyor of motor vehicles that have had one or more previous owners. If that were not enough, the *Express* imagined that Mr Clemence was about to be undergo a bankruptcy examination!

Sir David — ever vigilant, ever loyal — was soon on the phone to the editor of the *Daily Express*, Sir Nicholas Lloyd. He pleaded with Sir "Nick" not to burden the Rothermeres with any further distress. Happily, these knights of the press lived up to their chivalrous titles and a vile invasion of private family matters was averted.

'The Marquesa'

WHO wrote the letter denounced in the *Observer* as "filthy and libellous" by Peter Viggers, the wealthy Tory MP for Gosport and member of the council of Lloyd's of London, whose bold intervention on behalf of Lloyd's in a Commons debate on insider trading was reported in the last *Eye*?

The author is Lloyd's Name and London architect Philip Dinkel, who reacted angrily at the MP's signature on a circular letter to those like Mr Dinkel who are suing Lloyd's for negligence and malpractice.

The circular called on aggrieved "names" to settle their cases on terms proposed by Lloyd's. Mr Dinkel points out that among those who might benefit if the aggrieved names did settle on these terms are the "errors and omissions" syndicates at Lloyd's, who insure the market against its own mistakes.

Dinkel's letter reminds Viggers that the MP is on "errors and omissions" syndicates 820, 362 and 947, and on syndicates 40, 342 and 435, which carry additional errors and omissions insurance of Lloyd's worst agents.

Mr Dinkel has worked out that Mr Viggers stands to lose around £55,000 if the courts eventually find against his syndicates.

Mr Dinkel's letter went off on 12 February. He is awaiting a reply.

UNDER the citizen's charter the performance of many public bodies is assessed by how quickly they pick up the phone. One of the new railway quangoes is more interested in how quickly it can slam the phone *down* on callers.

One *Eye* reader rang the surly rail franchise director, Roger Salmon, at Opraf (the office of passenger rail franchising) earlier this year to ask how he planned to make rail tickets valid on different private companies' trains. He snapped that he had not issued any guidelines and refused to clarify any further.

Salmon then asked who was calling, and the reader explained that he was an ordinary rail user (he is also an officer with the Railway Development Society), whereupon Salmon made it clear that he does *not* talk to such nonentities as rail passengers. When our reader tried to ask another question Salmon simply cut him off. Opraf's press officer later apologised for this rudeness.

Salmon is a shining example of the accountability of Britain's quangoes. Quite apart from his behaviour towards the people who fund his fat salary, the former special adviser to the department of transport was given the Opraf job as the prize for a winning the DoT's "Most Ludicrous Method of Privatising BR" competition.

AS BRYAN GOULD shafts Labour leader John Smith prior to returning to New Zealand, questions are being asked about the political judgement of Gould's closest ally, David Blunkett.

Blunkett ran Gould's campaign against Smith for leader in the hope that if Gould were elected he, Blunkett, would be assured of preferment in a future Labour government.

In his farewell statements Gould spoke movingly of his 25 years struggling on behalf of working people. Odd, then, that on the day it was announced that he was off he missed votes at 6pm, at 6.06pm, 8.54pm and at 10pm — all of which were designed to protect the working conditions of employees should the Sunday trading bill become law.

Since there was no pairing, Gould will no doubt reveal what other vital parliamentary duties he was performing. Or was it simply that Gould was too cowardly to meet colleagues who are angry because they know the electorate have a habit of punishing political parties whose MPs resign unnecessarily?

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

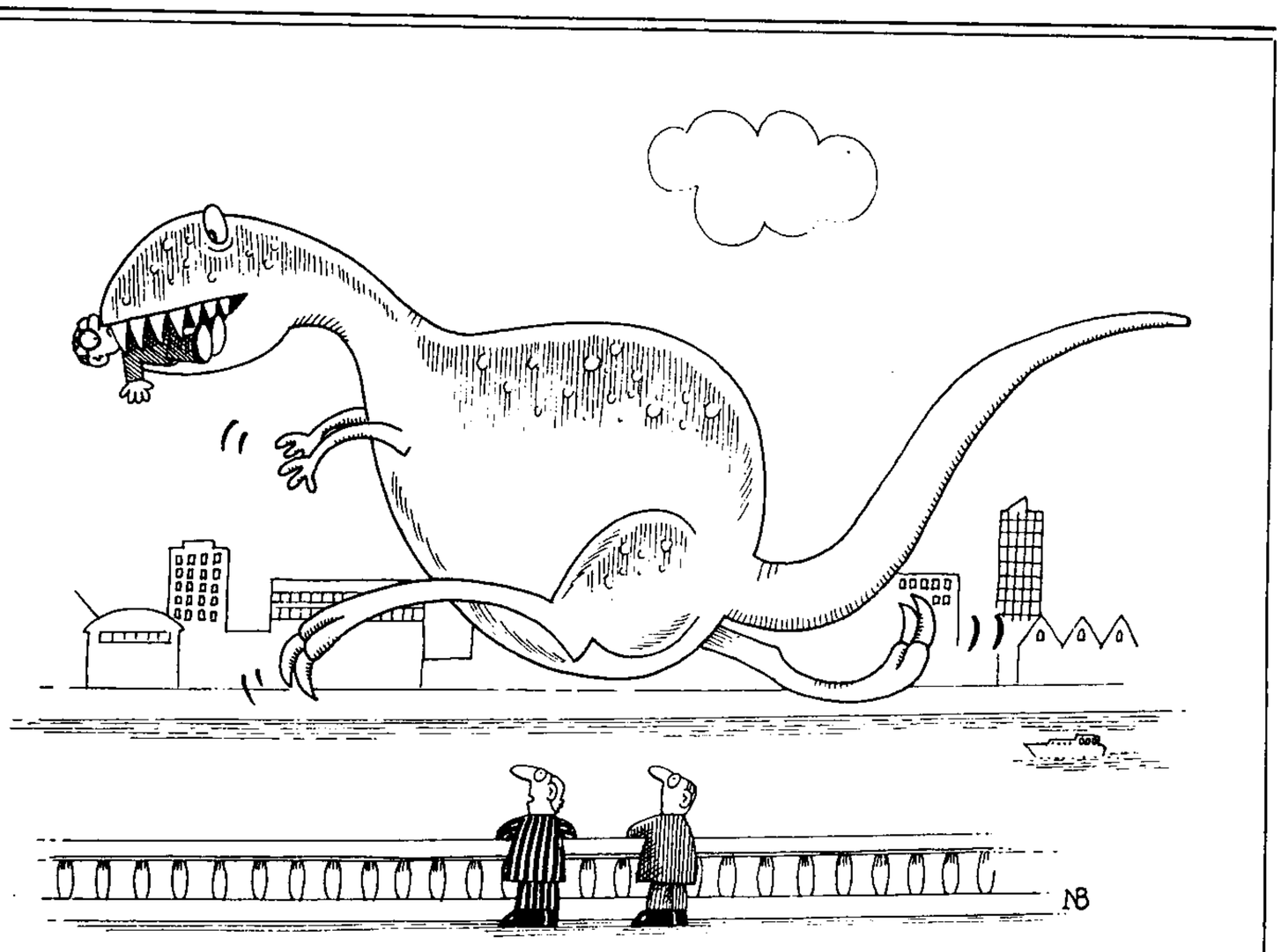
Mr Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the decision to grant support for the Pergau hydro-electric project in Malaysia was linked to any other bilateral trade agreement with Malaysia.

Mr Lennox-Boyd: No.

(Hansard, 3/11/93)

The Prime Minister: The Government made a commitment to the Pergau project in 1989 personally to the Malaysian Prime Minister. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I decided in 1991 to proceed, both to honour the commitment made by my predecessor and in the wider context of maintaining billions of pounds of British exports to Malaysia.

(Hansard, 18/1/94)



"Let's face it — he is an unlucky Prime Minister"

■ The Premier returned to basics himself in Russia yesterday when he abandoned his controversial black fur hat, despite icy temperatures.

He told aides he was unhappy with it. An embassy insider said: "He's worried it would end up on the front cover of Private Eye."

Daily Express

PROFESSOR Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, has reluctantly bowed to government pressure and recognised that he cannot refer National Power or PowerGen, the giant generating companies, to the monopolies commission.

The treasury, which owns 40 percent of their shares, worth £4 billion, wants to sell them quickly and a referral would have made that impossible. Instead the professor has settled for vague promises that the companies will try to sell off some of their power stations and reduce their dominance of the market.

Announcing the "settlement", Littlechild said: "I think the generators will deliver on these undertakings." Or of course they could prove as worthless as assurances from John Baker, chief executive of National Power, to the select committee on trade and industry, that he was "envisaging" buying more British coal…

Both generators are now considering setting up "separate" companies and "selling" their power stations to themselves.

Littlechild also said the generators had promised to try to cut electricity prices from the "pool" by 7 percent. This will mean nothing to ordinary homes and offices, which buy electricity from local regional companies (RECs). Only big users like ICI buy from the pool.

If National Power or PowerGen find this puts a strain on their dividends, they can always dip into the pension funds. As the professor said, that was not an issue for him. The generators and the RECs have been raiding many millions from the funds which they inherited from the Central Electricity Generating Board, so are not short of cash.

The small generators who provide some competition to the duopoly are the ones who will be hit hardest by the price cut. The chief executive of the Association of Independent Electricity Producers, David Green, said that "artificially depressing prices" was a blow to competition instead of encouraging it.

So if the big two are sitting back and smiling, why did Littlechild draw back from referring their duopoly to the monopolies commission? Did the treasury and DTI tell him to think again?

"I have been in contact with relevant government departments throughout the course of my negotiations," the professor replied, choosing his words carefully. So much for the "independent" regulator.

THE all-powerful liaison committee, which consists of the chairmen of the select committees, met in urgent session this month to discuss the damaging effect the absence of pairing is having… on MPs' overseas freebies.

Pairing — the convenient system by which an MP and his or her "pair" in another party agree to bunk off early and absent themselves from voting in the chamber — has been ditched by Labour in protest at the government's cavalier handling of parliamentary business.

The liaison committee generally takes the view that the work of select committees, including their foreign jaunts, is more important and more objective than the rowdy, run-of-the-mill stuff that happens in the chamber of the Commons.

Since Labour whips are the cause of the current trouble, one member of the liaison committee suggested they should sort out the problem with Derek Foster, Labour's chief whip. However, it was thought that discussions with Foster would demean the status of the liaison committee, so the committee is going to see Labour leader John Smith instead.

Meanwhile Richard Caborn, chairman of the trade select committee, faces a motion of censure from his committee for not trying hard enough to get a visit to South Africa.

SHADOW cabinet elections are still nine months away, but Jack Cunningham, Labour's shadow foreign secretary who scraped into bottom position in last year's poll, has begun canvassing already.

But Cunningham has problems. At Westminster his ludicrous vanity is being exposed by a tape recording that is being passed round of a broadcast on BBC Radio Cumbria that coincided with his appointment to the privy council.

On the tape Cunningham tells the world he is so important that visiting statesmen and prime ministers to Britain often want to meet him alone. Inviting the radio reporter into the shadow cabinet room, Jack tells us that "the boss" John Smith "sits there and I sit opposite him". Labour MPs find the tape a laugh a minute.

Meanwhile there is outrage in Cunningham's Cumbrian constituency at his support for Nirex, the radioactive waste people who want to bury throbbing nuclear rubbish there. Even MPs in the county who support the nuclear industry at Sellafield don't go along with this. So why is Cunningham going it alone?

Jayne Comins
Speech & Language Therapist
Royal Fee Hospital
Pond Street
NW3 2QG

BEFORE they lose the next election, the Tories want to carve up local government boundaries in a way that ensures better results for them in future.

They last did this in 1963, but the boundaries they fixed then are not producing the favourable results expected. This is now the purpose of the local government commission under Sir John Banham, a Tory who has been heard to protest at the blatant gerrymandering he is expected to sanction.

However bad the rigging in England, it cannot possibly be more corrupt than Tory proposals for Scottish local government, which seek to destroy the big Labour authorities in Strathclyde and Lothian and replace them with a host of smaller districts councils which will be far less reluctant to take orders from the Scottish office.

Pretty well everyone in Scotland is opposed to the new local government (Scotland) bill. On the floor of the House, of course, the Tories can ram it through with their English majority. But what of the bill's standing committee? To ensure a Tory majority, five English MPs have been drafted on to it: Timothy Kirkhope from Leeds, who acts as a Scottish whip; Roger Knapman from Stroud; Peter Atkinson from Hexham; Simon Coombs from Swindon; and Harold Elletson from Blackpool North.

One man who is rather surprised at the English Five is Sir Nicholas Fairbairn, who has served Scottish constituencies as a Tory for 20 years. Sir Nick had assumed he would serve on the committee, but was not invited. The reason is believed to be connected to Sir Nick's annoying habit of not flinging himself headlong at the feet of the government whips.

Such a man might have the effrontery to vote against the bill's more reckless gerrymandering. The whips' view was well summarised to the *Eye* by a Labour member of the committee: "Better a loyalist stockbroker from Stroud than a nutter from Perth."

WHILE Betty Boothroyd, the speaker of the Commons, was clearly moved at the memorial service for her friend Jo Richardson, other women Labour MPs seemed far less so.

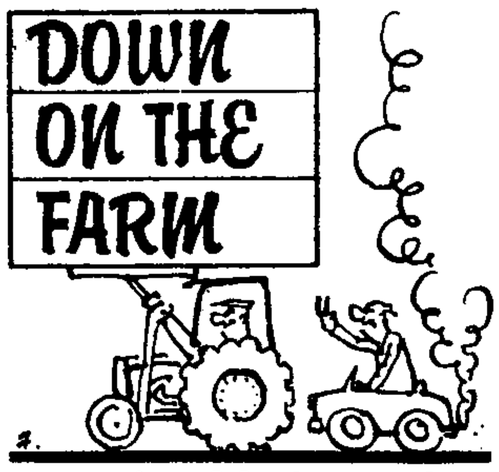
Some months before Ms Richardson, the Labour MP for Barking, died, she asked if she could use the lady members' room, in the corridor behind the speaker's chair, as a temporary office because there was a lift nearby and it was convenient.

When Labour's women MPs met to discuss the request they decided it would be inconvenient to accede to it. So instead of spending the last few months, weeks and days of her life at the Commons working and chatting to colleagues, Ms Richardson spent much of the time alone, imprisoned by her own thoughts.

Is this what Labour women MPs mean by positive discrimination in favour of a disabled and crippled colleague?

Labour whip Ray Powell, who is responsible for finding offices for Labour MPs but who told the general committee of his constituency party that he did not personally want any more women in parliament in Wales, might also now regret his failure to sort matters out for Ms Richardson.

'Backbiter'



with 'New Muckspreader'

STAFF and representatives of the National Farmers' Union have been told by director-general David Evans there is no such thing as a "personal opinion". If required to speak to a journalist, they must follow agreed national policy.

Criticism, it seems, has no place in the vibrant and democratic NFU. But when farmers gathered at Kensington town hall earlier this month to hear their president, David Naish, deliver his second agm address, they were in no mood to heed Evans' injunction. They described his speech as "lacklustre and platitudinous". It was so lacking in passion or conviction that delegates were unsure even when to applaud.

Some, listening to the NFU president describing his vision of a brave new consumer-responsive farming world, felt more akin to apparatchiks listening to an orchestrated Stalinesque ritual. Those waiting for lively debate to give the agm the kiss of life, thought the proceedings not so much orchestrated as castrated, Evans no doubt wielding the scalpel.

PREDICTABLY, one thing delegates did not hear from their president was a clarion call for the abolition of farming subsidies, as advocated by his predecessor, Simon Gourlay, now banished to Wales.

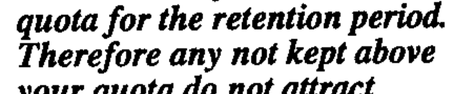
Nor did they hear it from the invisible lady, aka Gillian Shephard, agriculture minister. Such is the power of the EC that our free-market Tory will only commit the government to reduce support — now running at £30 billion Europe-wide — to "bring supply and demand into balance" when controls can be dismantled.

Seductive though this vision might be, such is the complexity of the supply-demand equation that the combined forces of Brussels and Whitehall are unequal to the task of solving it. Trapped in the fantasy world of the common agricultural policy, Shephard is writing a recipe for endless state control, behaving for all the world like a closet socialist.

IF MORE proof were needed of the incompetence of the state system, one only need look at the ludicrous attempts of the ministry of agriculture's central veterinary laboratory (CVL) to install a computer system to record BSE "mad cow" sample results.

The CVL is a government agency at the "forefront" of research into animal diseases, including BSE and salmonella. A key function is to provide early warning to farmers and the government of any possible epidemic, and its sample data are a key part of the early warning system.

But, after spending £1.2 million of other people's money, the project failed for reasons common to nearly all previous public sector disasters: it was too big, too ambitious and involved too much bespoke software. Without the system — which has been worked on since 1990 — valuable data on BSE may be lost, or results delayed.



IF THE Maffia cannot organise such a relatively simple task as the computerisation of sample data, there is little hope of it managing the slightly more complex task of matching UK agricultural production with the vagaries of consumer demand — or of reducing state subsidies.

Yokel farmers, dismayed by the chaos and complexity of subsidy claims, are finding no relief even when their cheques are calculated. Joanna Wheatley, an organic beef farmer in Maidenhead, was perplexed by her notification, which read as follows:

"Your claim is reduced to your available quota. You are not required to keep more animals than you have available quota for the retention period. Therefore any not kept above your quota do not attract penalties. But if you increase your quota for this year to cover the number claimed, you must have kept the number of cows claimed for the full retention period for premium based on the number claimed."

For a 19-strong herd of belted Galloways, Wheatley is to be paid £702.04, which, given the time she has spent filling in forms and trying to understand the resultant communications, works out at something less than £7 per hour. Small wonder a growing band of farmers are arguing for the abolition of a system that serves to swell the growing ranks of mad officials.

Old Macdonald

ALBERT

IM TELLIN YOU! YOU DONT NEED THEM EAR PROTECTORS!!
I BLOODY DO!! YOU CANT BE TOO CAREFUL WI' HEARING.
AN' WHAT IF THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER TURNS UP EH? THE OLD GIRLS WELL OVER THE DECIBEL LIMIT.
RUBBISH!!
ANYWAY, SHES ONLY STAYIN' FOR THE WEEKEND!

RAIL NEWS

NETWORK SouthEast's Thameslink division has a new way to deal with late-running trains: stop running them altogether.

Its customer report for 1993, issued under the passenger's charter, boasts of improved off-peak services. But it then says: "For peak passengers the situation is slightly different. We have made the steps towards providing a more regularly timed service in the evening peak."

Further on it becomes clear that this is a euphemism for a huge withdrawal of services: "Thameslink services to Sevenoaks and Guildford will be replaced by other operators."

"Replaced" is not quite the right word. The other operators are just as short of cash and rolling stock as Thameslink, so they will run less than *half* the services currently provided by Thameslink.

ITV

Gangsters (Carlton)
Underworld (BBC1)

IN THE unlucky dip that is the television schedules, the reviewer is occasionally offered the prize of two series on the same subject, though made by different channels. At a time when the identities of the main British broadcasters are in unprecedented flux, playing the imitation game is especially illuminating.

A current textbook example of copycat scheduling crime — the coincidence of the crooks-look-back series *Gangsters* on ITV and *Underworld* on BBC1 — has the still extra attraction of involving documentary, the television genre which has always separated the public service men from the ratings-chasing boys. So let's match the fingerprints.

COMMENTARY: *Gangsters* uses a routine TV bit of gruff to deliver feeling-the-collar comments like: "The events that unfolded next were to change the course of underworld history..." And: "The police were searching for the first cracks in the wall of silence that protected the Krays."

For *Underworld,* the BBC has employed Bob Hoskins, on the grounds that he once played a gangster in *The Long Good Friday* and is an East Ender, like most of the show's subjects. It is rumoured that Leslie Grantham — the perfect thematic choice, being an actor with criminal form — turned the job down. Hoskins gets lines like: "Violence was proving an easier route to the money than stealth and skill." But his tone can never decide whether he's on the side of the law or the lags.

CONTENT: The first episode of *Gangsters* elaborately retold the story of the murder of Jack "The Hat" McVitie by the Kray brothers. Bizarrely, this is the second time in the last few months that Carlton has told this story in the 7.20pm documentary slot: it featured in *The Big Story*, last year. This is presumably what was meant by the bit in their franchise bid about reflecting the culture and traditions of their transmission area.

Underworld attempts an overview, charting, through the stories of a handful of criminals, the industrialisation and increasing violence of British crime in the years either side of the second world war. In the first episode, the cosh, the jemmy and the drainpipe shimmy were shown giving way to the use — imported from America — of gelignite and firearms.

STYLE: Unexpectedly, *Gangsters* avoids the editing-suite shock tactics now common in the ITV documentary, in favour of a cheap and simple first-person format. The demise of "The Hat" was narrated in alternate sound-bites by Tony and Chris Lambrianou, brothers who hung out with The Brothers.

"That was the last in the series of Songs of Praise. Next Sunday we launch The Shopping Channel!"

The approach was therefore oral — or, as they say in the underworld, verbals — history.

Underworld displays the usual BBC confusion at the moment by adopting an odd hard cop/soft cop approach of shamelessly down-market subject matter still trying to reflect the Birtian obsession with "context" and "education". The meat of the first show was first-person narrative from grimy old characters straight-facedly captioned as "Mad" Frankie Fraser and George "Taters" Chatham. But then there would be the occasional nervous trimmings of an interview with a retired high court judge, or a few home office statistics, or sociological context.

MORALITY: Both Carlton and the BBC seem to have become aware, at some time during production, that criminality was not one of those subjects on which they could get away with being even-handed. So, in *Gangster*, Tony and Chris stress, at the end of the episode, their "shame" about what they did. One of them even has a little speech about not understanding how "glamour" has become associated with criminality.

Underworld has more trouble on this score. Old "Taters" dutifully advises younger viewers that "nothing's worth losing your liberty for", but most of the other old lags seem happy enough with the way things turned out. Even the sub-Birtist "context" backfires morally by providing useful lessons in criminal technique. Overall, the show is far less critical and judgemental than any of the BBC's many documentary series about the police, which seems rather odd.

Based on the evidence of these two series, even Inspector Knacker could work out what is going on. In the old days, the different television gangs kept to their own patches, with a grudging respect for each others' methods. Then the South Bank Gang was taken over by aggressive new corporate blaggers like Paul "Ratings" Jackson and Gerry "The Chef" Robinson, who brought in the big guns and ran the gentlemanly operators out of town. Confused, and losing out to these new American-invented methods, the old-fashioned White City gang started half-heartedly copying them.

Thus, BBC1's *Underworld* becomes twice as interesting if viewed as a metaphor for what was happening in television. Nothing, though, can add an extra level to *Gangsters*, which merely stands as yet another criminal series from Carlton.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

WHAT A difference a fortnight makes in the exciting world of poptabulous broadcasting.

On 4 February Simon (call me Mister) Bates wrote a full page "excoriating attack" in the *Daily Mail* on Matthew Bannister's Radio 1 reshuffle, which has seen listeners leaving the station in their millions.

The beleaguered controller was monstered by Bates, who noted that whether Bannister "likes it or not, Radio 1 is on a downward trend". "Is it too late to save the BBC?" Bates asked, before deciding "probably not, but certainly Radio 1 looks like a terminal case. It would be impossible to change either format or personnel for at least a year without massive loss of face. John Birt is apparently willing to accept a further fall in audience as the price of change."

By 15 February, Britain's Number One DJ had changed his tune. Again in the *Daily Mail* he commented on ratings which revealed a "dramatic slump in the pop station's audience". This time he was less excoriating. "I am sure they will get the figures back up again. I wish them nothing but luck."

The apparent volte face has nothing to do with the fact that Bates's planned move to Dublin-based Atlantic 252 has fallen through, and that Simes is once again pondering his future as a presenter... on Radios 2 and 4 and BBC television!

LIVE performances of Tchaikovsky's 6th Symphony (the Pathétique) often cause sophisticated concertgoers to laugh knowingly when lesser mortals mistake the crashing ending of the third movement for the end of the symphony itself.

Not so at Radio Camden — aka Classic FM — which recently billed the Pathétique as the climax of its evening concert. Sure enough, at the end of the third movement, with listeners awaiting the symphony's moving denouement, the programme's presenter butted in and brought proceedings to a close.

After a pause another announcer apologised for the "technical hitch" and promised that the whole symphony would be played next time. Perhaps Classic FM should stick to what it knows — ie gardening.

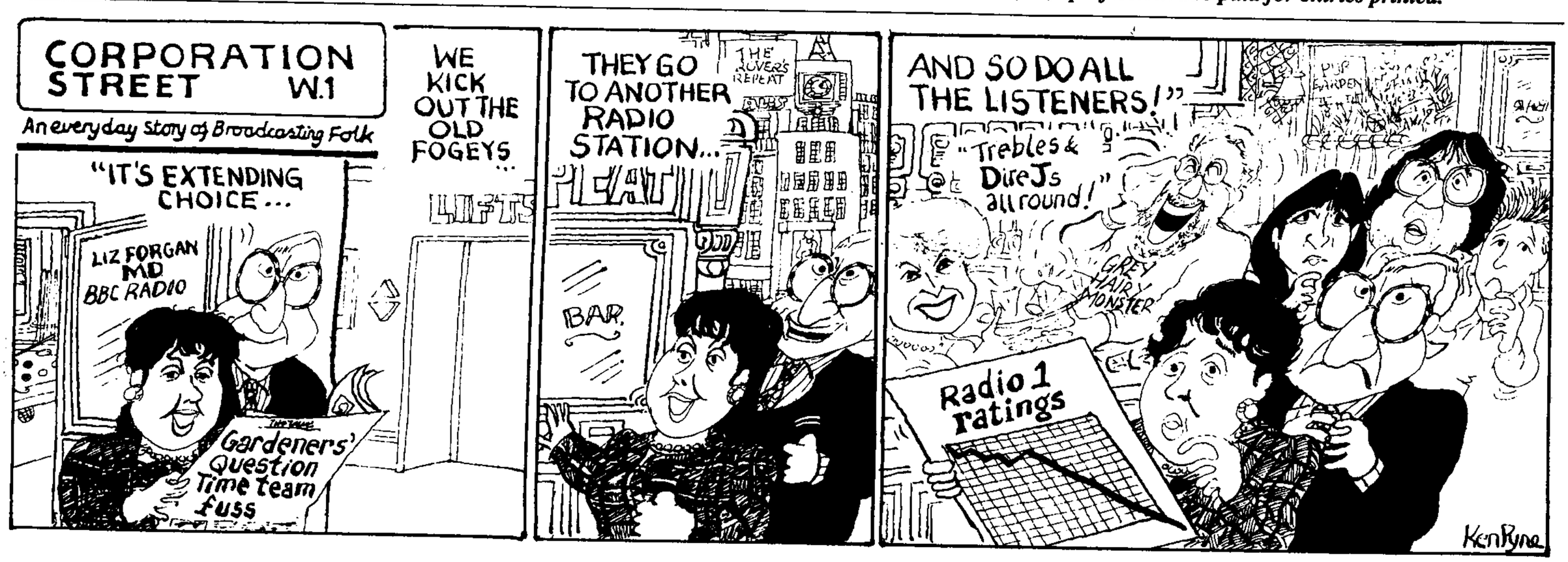
LUVVIES

■ What I do is a gift to people. I make a movie, I'm saying this is my blood, sweat, tears, joy, guts, sorrow... everything. I've worked on it as hard as I could and it's for everybody. And that's not enough. But that's all I've got to give.

JULIA ROBERTS
Time Out

Submitted by Maxie Szalwinska

An occasional column devoted to the acting profession. £10 paid for entries printed.



A LAUGHABLE inquiry is taking place in the upper echelons of the Liberal Democrat party into how details of Lord Lester's report into alleged racism in Tower Hamlets were leaked to the *Guardian*.

A couple of days before the report was due to be published in December, the *Guardian* contacted Paddy Ashdown's office for confirmation of its findings. And how did the paper know the contents of Lord Lester's report? When told that no comment would be made until the day of the report's release, the *Guardian* said that since it would be running the story anyway, the Liberals might as well come clean.

A deal was reached whereby Ashdown's office would furnish the *Graun* with full details — *even before party members criticised in the report were informed* — so long as the paper withheld its scoop until the day before its official announcement.

But how fair was the investigation which found that a handful of Liberals had been "pandering to racism?" Although much was made of a petition signed by 300 Bengalis calling for the expulsion of three Liberal councillors, Jeremy Shaw, Jim Smith and Betty Wright, for allegedly making racist speeches, writing racist leaflets and sacking a Bengali council worker who had stood up to them, no mention was made of information that rebutted the accusations.

Smith and Wright had, in fact, made no speeches; nor had they written *any* leaflets. Moreover, the sacked Bengali had been fired for corruption, a decision upheld at an industrial tribunal. Presumably Paddy Ashdown will now be instigating a new inquiry.

SISTER SLEDGE

AS Anthony Everitt, the Arts Council's soon to be ex-secretary-general, is rumoured to have found a new job as visual arts supremo at Trent University, the incoming Lord Gowrie, the first paid chairman in the council's history, has a lot to worry about.

Apart from the continuing row over the funding of London orchestras, there is a severe cash crisis in the regions.

The renowned City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) is encored in Salzburg, acclaimed in Vienna — and facing bankruptcy at home. The Arts Council has refused to increase its grant for two years, and the orchestra is £250,000 in the red. It may have to sack musicians and cut its programme, and its conductor, Simon Rattle, has threatened to leave unless he is assured of financial stability.

When alarmed minions at the Arts Council summoned their bosses to discuss the crisis, they languidly deferred any decision — indefinitely.

Meanwhile, the Hallé, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and the Bournemouth orchestras are also desperately short of cash, hit by the double whammy of standstill grants from the Arts Council, now unable to justify diverting money from the capital, and shrinking local authority funding.

Unlike their London counterparts, regional orchestras are contractually bound to pay their players even when there is no work. Savings must be made in other areas. Like Rattle at the CBSO, the Hallé's music director, Kent Nagano, has hinted he move on if his orchestra's financial position does not improve.

DEATH OF AN EXPERT WITNESS

FOLLOWING the death of intelligence writer James Rusbridger, found hanging from the rafters of his Cornish cottage clad in a gas-mask and oilskin coat, MI5's pet hacks have rushed to dance on his grave.

James "Toady" Adams of the *Sunday Times* dismissed him as "a fantasist who fooled publishers and the media for years", adding that Rusbridger's book *The Intelligence Game* was "littered with factual inaccuracies and misleading information". This line was echoed by two other spy-scribblers, Chapman Pincher and Rupert Allason MP (aka Nigel West).

These men are hardly disinterested witnesses: they all took a well-deserved pasting in *The Intelligence Game*. As Rusbridger often pointed out, Adams, Pincher and West have made a handsome living over the years from faithfully reproducing information (or, indeed, misinformation) fed to them by the security and intelligence services, and they strongly resent anyone who dares criticise their spooky chums.

Indeed, when Adams found that *The Intelligence Game* challenged the official account of the Gibraltar shootings — the account so loyally recycled in the *Sunset Times* by James Adams — he sent Rusbridger an indignant letter of rebuke. "I think putting about such theories does neither those groups [SAS and MI5] nor the country as a whole any service," Adams complained. Small wonder that he should be hostile to Rusbridger, who did not share his view that journalists have a duty to perform a "service" for MI5.

Meanwhile, police investigating the reasons for Rusbridger's suicide would be well advised to pay a call on a firm of London solicitors, Tuckers, as well as a barrister named Gary Summers, who works in the chambers of Rock Tansey QC.

Last March, Rusbridger was phoned out of the blue by Summers, who said he was to be Tansey's junior counsel in the defence of Michael Smith, an electronics engineer facing trial on four charges of passing secrets to the Russians. Summers asked Rusbridger if he would act as the defence team's intelligence expert in the months before the trial. He would also need to be available every day during the trial, which was expected to last for two or three months. Rusbridger agreed, but pointed out that he would have to abandon all his other work to devote himself to the task, and would therefore have to be paid about £400 a day plus expenses. According to Rusbridger, Summers replied that that seemed reasonable.

The arrangement was then confirmed by Smith's solicitors, Tuckers. "We now formally instruct you to act as our expert in this matter," Richard Jefferies of Tuckers wrote to him on 5 April last year. "You will be instructed on a fee paying basis."

Over the following weeks, a succession of couriers arrived at Rusbridger's house in Cornwall with bundles of documents for him to inspect. He was also asked by Summers to prepare a large number of reports, which involved Rusbridger in making numerous inquiries by phone and fax to the CIA in Washington, KGB in Moscow, ASIO in Australia and Mossad in Tel-Aviv.

On 7 May, Rusbridger received a letter from Paul Bird, the director of finance at Tuckers, who revealed for the first time that Michael Smith was being defended on legal aid and there was no guarantee that Rusbridger would be paid for any of his work. Rusbridger pointed out that none of this had been mentioned before, and that he had now run up substantial bills — phone, fax, postage, photocopying — which had to be met soon. He asked for the £3,000 already due to him to be paid immediately.

Bird did not reply. But Summers, the barrister, continued to bombard Rusbridger with requests for information, which was duly provided. The barrister continually praised the speed and efficiency of his expert consultant's work. He was also sympathetic about the money question. "I can understand your being cheesed off," he told Rusbridger on 1 July. But it was out of his hands: "The solicitors are *always* responsible for the payment of experts."

Rusbridger's increasingly frantic letters to Tuckers about the lack of payment still went unanswered. By July, when the fees due to him had risen to almost £6,000, he was in serious financial difficulty: unable to pay his phone bill, he was cut off by British Telecom.

Finally, a Mr Barry Tucker of Tuckers contacted Rusbridger, claiming it had been made clear from the outset that the case was legally aided. This was untrue — and also irrelevant, since, in the words of the Legal Aid board's own adviser, even in legally-aided cases "the solicitor should pay the expert the amount stated in his or her bill within a reasonable time".

At the end of August, Tuckers eventually sent a cheque for £1,175 to Rusbridger, saying it was all they could afford; but even this was hedged about with restrictions, including the right to have it returned on demand.

That was not even enough to cover Rusbridger's debt to British Telecom (some £2,300). With his phone and fax line cut off, he was effectively unable to resume his old journalistic work. He was also threatened with eviction from his cottage for non-payment of rent. During the autumn he sank deeper and deeper into despair. "The whole affair has been a nightmare," he wrote to a friend just before Christmas.

A few weeks later, on the day he was due to be evicted, James Rusbridger hanged himself.

On Monday this week, the *Eye* asked Richard Jefferies of Tuckers if he had been in touch with the Cornish police. He seemed surprised. "They haven't contacted me and I haven't contacted them." Mightn't it be a good idea to ring them, since Rusbridger's debts were clearly a likely reason for his apparent suicide? "If I can be perfectly blunt," he said, "I hadn't thought of that. But now you mention it, I don't see any reason why I shouldn't [contact the police]. It might help them understand how he was feeling." It might indeed.

FOOD AND ENTERTAINING

● This month oranges *are* the only fruit – from tiny clementines and thick-skinned mineolas to the bitter appeal of sevilles. Here's how to make the most of them *YOU magazine*

HUSBAND

GREAT PATRIOTS No 94

ROY FAEIRS, the multi-millionaire "patriot" and publisher of the quarterly *This England* magazine, has paid a massive sum —estimated at several millions — to the Inland Revenue (IR) in a secret deal to avoid prosecution.

Faeirs started publishing *This England* in 1968 as an addition to his stable of money-spinning county magazines. Gradually, its nostalgic English pastoral whimsy became infected with diatribes against the "multi-racial, multi-cultural society".

It is now rabidly anti-immigration and anti-European, and a few years ago it began to publish articles by Stuart Millson, a former Essex University student who had been involved with the British National Party, dabbled in the Monday Club and then formed his own right-wing group, the Revolutionary Conservative Caucus.

At the 1992 general election Millson was agent for an Anti-Federal Europe candidate in Cheltenham, Melvyn Rendell, while Faeirs paid for Rendell's campaign signs. Intriguingly, Millson is behind the recent attempt to commandeer a Conservative party ward branch in Colchester.

On 30 October 1991, Roy Faeirs wrote in his diary: "Today we formed 'The Britannia League'— dedicated to preserving Britain's sovereignty and independence... The League was informally inaugurated at Spring Cottage, Candle Green, Glos. — Stuart's house, miles from anywhere."

A later diary entry (6 December 1991) records: "Stuart went off to London today to meet Le Pen, the French politician. Tomorrow Stuart is giving a short talk to the Conservative 'Monday Club' on British nationhood. Good lad." This was a reference to the notorious Western Goals dinner for Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of France's National Front party.

However, another entry shows Faeirs was prepared to deny Millson when the association threatened his commercial activities (12 December 1991): "Had a letter of complaint today about Stuart's picture in the *Mail on Sunday*; which I answered immediately. It will therefore affect our 'Britannia' idea in the next issue. I shall drop his name from the masthead."

In July 1993, following information received about his affairs, Faeirs was arrested at Staverton airport in Gloucestershire after he arrived from Guernsey. A total of 55 tax officials and plain-clothes police officers were involved in raids on his business headquarters and various homes.

The operation was planned by the IR's special investigation branch in Birmingham. At first, Faeirs was charged with a specimen offence concerning his residence for tax purposes. He protested his innocence and it appeared that it all must have been a terrible mistake when the tax evasion charge was dropped in early October. A local newspaper report suggested that Faeirs's solicitor was considering an application for defence costs.

Since then Faeirs has been realising assets and arranging cash transfers to pay an agreed settlement with the IR. The *Eye* has now learnt the extent of his hypocrisy, deception and evasion of his tax responsibilities to a sovereign Britain.

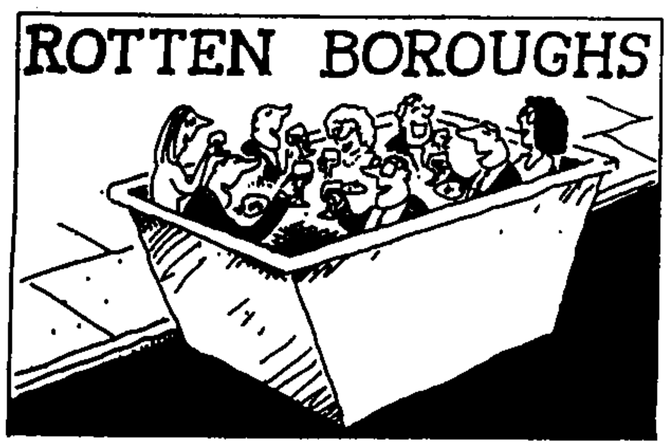
Faeirs last submitted a tax return for the year 1975-76 on the grounds that for tax purposes he and his wife Dorothy have been legally resident abroad. In fact, they have resided at Swift's Place, Cleeve Hill, Cheltenham, since March 1972 and in no single year since then have they met the legal qualification for non-resident status.

Information sent to the IR included flying log-books and copies of his diaries over 10 years which showed that the number of days spent in the UK were as follows. In 1984: 236; 1984: 240; 1986: 247; 1987: 253 days; 1988: 274; 1989: 313; 1990: 297; 1991: 310; and 1992: 290. The average number of days a year that Faeirs and his wife spent in the UK during the period was 273 days.

A company with the ironic name Sovereign & Legal Securities Inc. was formed in Panama on 10 February 1976. The directors of this company were Simon Appleyard (alias Roy Faeirs) and Dorothy Middleton (alias Dorothy Faeirs), plus two bogus names of non-existent directors. Simon Appleyard used the same Spanish PO box as Faeirs and gave his UK address as Alma House, 73 Rodney Road, Cheltenham — the business premises of *This England* and Faeirs's other titles.

Faeirs also has a couple of Delaware-registered companies, Albion International Publishing Limited (formed in 1991), and Monserrat Estates Inc. Faeirs and his wife own properties in Spain (valued at £800,000 in 1992) and Guernsey (purchase price in 1992: £1.3 million), as well as houses in Grimsby and Exeter and nine properties in Cheltenham.

Copies of bank statements up to January 1993 show he had cash deposits in his own name, or in the names of companies he owns, totalling more than £22 million. Most of this cash was deposited offshore in Guernsey — hence the Inland Revenue's decision (at board of commissioners level) to do a deal and recover some of the tax Faeirs has withheld from the exchequer of a sovereign Britain.



BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM'S St John's children's home beat its own record for the number of youngsters arrested while supposedly in care last month — but its social workers did not even notice.

They are too busy fighting their own politically correct battles in the weird alternative culture that passes for the city's child care service.

The home has around 50 staff but only about 20 children, a staffing level that inflates the cost of each child to around £1,500 a week — far more than a luxury hotel. It also leaves plenty of time for in-fighting. Special groups for black staff, women staff and gay staff have sprung up and they spend many happy hours wrangling while the youngsters run riot.

The latest to be caught in the crossfire is social worker Frank Robinson. He has been suspended after three women accused him of "inappropriate touching." The complaints came after the wimmin's group met to discuss Robinson's behaviour. Sadly, they had all forgotten that Robinson is black and his accusers white. Within minutes of his suspension black staff had mobilised with a counterclaim, accusing management of "victimisation" and suggesting that Robinson was being subjected to a racist attack.

The row nearly closed the home with all the women and black staff threatening to walk out. Superficial peace was only restored when John Coughlan, social services' unctuous, upwardly mobile divisional manager, offered anyone with complaints "individual special counselling," a prospect so appalling even staff at St John's could not face it.

Meanwhile the city's Oakhill home is catching up with St John's as Birmingham's premier university of crime after a gang of drug-crazed residents ran amok and smashed the place up. It emerged that a dozen of the most dangerous and unstable delinquents are regularly left alone at night in the care of just two social workers.

LEEDS

TORY councillors in Leeds were quick to condemn Labour for allowing the local authority's pension funds to be invested in T&N, accused of contaminating hundreds of homes with asbestos (see *Eye* 839).

But the Conservatives themselves have not escaped contamination in the affair. For the T&N company accounts reveal political donations totalling £75,000 to the, er, sanctimonious Tory party.

MURKEYSIDE

TWO DAYS after a plan to turn farmland at Knowsley into a waste dump was highlighted in the *Eye* (838), the trio behind the scheme to turn muck into brass revealed themselves.

They are an unlikely team. For the men who want to dig a 125-foot hole in greenbelt land fill it full of crap are Kirkby solicitor Kevin Alphonsus Dooley, who sold the original owner's land to the mysterious company D.W. Ltd (sans registered accounts, sans telephone directory number, etc); Henry Williams, a local "night club boss"; and Roy Evans, the new manager of Liverpool football club.

None has an obvious track record in waste disposal, yet they are also bidding for Knowsley council's bins contract along with planning permission for their own tip in the borough. While the council's efficient bin men are worried by this threatened privatisation, Everton supporters are delighted that Evans has additional business interests. They feel he is well qualified to manage a rubbish team.

ABERDEEN

WHY do councillors keep appointing rogues and charlatans to high office? Take, for example, Aberdeen and Donald A. Macdonald, its chief executive.

When councillors appointed him in 1990 they knew he had served two prison terms, one for fraud, one for theft and using dodgy banknotes, during the 60s, and they knew that he had been fined £100 by Aberdeen sheriff court in 1987 for failing to list his form when applying for a shotgun licence — not the best CV, perhaps, for a civil servant being paid £50,000 a year to look after a multi-million pound budget.

These facts may never have emerged had not distinguished members of the engineering profession noticed that Macdonald's name on Aberdeen council notepaper was accompanied by a bogus honours degree and the letters of three engineering institutions, none of which he belonged to. Funnily enough, similar titles accompanied his name in the mid-70s when he worked for Ayrshire and Arran health board.

Nevertheless, Macdonald admitted "gross negligence": the letters had "appeared" on council material some years previously and he had not removed them. He staunchly declared there was no question of his resigning, and, in any case, he was due to appear before a council disciplinary hearing regarding complaints of alleged bullying made by 14 members of staff, including the council chief solicitor, personnel director and head of public relations.

Eventually public pressure proved too much, and at the beginning of February he quit the council. But the ex-jailbird need not worry. Aberdeen councillors have taken pity on him and, rather than prosecute him for supplying false information — as did North Kesteven council with a mendacious chief executive applicant a few years ago — Aberdeen has bunged him a £400,000 golden handshake. Who says crime doesn't pay?

"I think, Wilson, as we have been trapped in the lift for only six minutes, the necessity to drink our own urine for survival has yet to arise"

NOOKS and CORNERS

PAUL JOHNSON, Auberon Waugh and other distinguished Catholic bores assure us that their Mother Church is now the dominant and, *de facto*, the real established Christian faith in Britain. If so, this interesting fact has failed to penetrate the consciousness of those in authority in the Roman Catholic church.

Bishops and archbishops continue to behave as if their church were still a minority, persecuted sect. This is manifested in their dislike of converts and, above all, in their fear of any spiritual symbol which requires responsible and public-spirited behaviour. By that I mean fine churches.

There is an extraordinary case of this in Hereford, where the principal Roman Catholic church is in Broad Street, right in the centre of the ancient city and almost next to the cathedral (for the moment still in the hands of the Anglicans).

Dedicated to St Francis Xavier, it announces its civic presence with a magnificent tall Greek Doric facade. It was designed by Charles Day, a London architect who was then county surveyor of Worcester and who was also responsible for the similar and equally lovely Roman Catholic church in Bury St Edmunds. Begun in the first year of Queen Victoria's reign and consecrated in 1839, a decade after the passing of the Catholic emancipation act, this is a Greek Revival building of peculiar interest which proudly proclaims not only tolerance but the revival of Roman Catholicism after centuries of persecution.

So the Archbishop of Cardiff has decided to close it. This prelate claims that, after years of neglect, the building is in poor shape, so better to sell the site and build a nice new church elsewhere. Such is the conclusion of a "working party" set up by a former parish priest and containing a pliant local architect, Nigel Dees, and it is endorsed by the present incumbent, Fr Peter Fell, OSB. This is in spite of the fact that money was spent on eradicating dry rot a few years back, and that there is now no obvious sign of structural problems.

Yet the archbishop asserts it will cost £500,000 to £750,000 to "put right" — a figure presumably plucked from the air. But the real complaint with the present church seems to be that there are difficulties with parking and that there is no "social centre" attached. So, instead of a proud and civilised Roman Catholic presence in the bustling heart of Hereford, a dim suburban site is preferred where wretched cars can be parked in comfort. Not, of course, that parishioners have been consulted about this: lay democracy is an Anglican heresy.

That more importance is attached to such mundane considerations than the fact that St Francis Xavier is a beautiful, numinous and historic building, raised on the site of an earlier Catholic chapel, says much about the attitudes of the Archbishop of Cardiff and his clergy. And about their intelligence. Do they seriously think they can clear the site and sell it for a supermarket — especially as English Heritage paid £60,000 of the £100,000 bill for eradicating dry rot? It is difficult to decide whether this philistine proposal is simply a product of stupidity or the usual episcopal hatred of any building of aesthetic merit or distinction.

MY PHOTOGRAPH shows the ancestral home of Alan Clark, the military historian and former politician. It is, or rather was, Kilnside House in Paisley. Idle journalists and Conservative party zealots cheerfully assume that Clark has class because he was at Eton and lives at Saltwood Castle. In fact, his antecedents are not aristocratic at all but much more distinguished and illustrate the essential mobility of British society.

Clark's father, Lord Clark of Civilisation, bought Saltwood off Bill Deedes's dad, a proper gent, with money inherited from manufacturing cotton thread in Paisley where, until they were bought out by the Coats family, the Clarks ran the Anchor Mills. In 1872, Stewart Clark acquired Kilnside House, a handsome neo-Classical mansion built in 1830. Later it was used as a canteen and dining hall for the Anchor Mills until they closed in 1983.

Then poor Kilnside House was made into a "leisure centre" and in 1991 it became the* Talk of the Town *night club. This was not popular and it was recently threatened with a closure order. Its owner, Steven Malcolm, put in an application to build flats in the grounds while, over Christmas, it was damaged by two "mysterious fires". Having been asked by the building control people to make the building safe, the owner brought in KB Construction who obligingly flattened the whole structure with a JCB on 3 February. This, he announced, was a "dreadful mistake" owing to a "breakdown in communication". So sad.

In a civilized society, of course, Mr Malcolm would be shot. But a local authority has only the power to fine him and compel him to reinstate the listed building. So what will Renfrew district council do? As this is the council (Eyes passim) which acquiesced in the shameful demolition of the Ferguslie Mill, is prepared to throw Lorimer's Formakin to the wolves and has presided over the continuing mutilation and vulgarisation of the once fine town still graced by the Clark Town Hall, I am not optimistic.

'Piloti'

Paisley Daily Express

Pseuds Corner

If one believes that appropriation is not a viable aesthetic, then one must conclude that shopping in the pawnshop of tonality will yield musical pages that are yellowed and old. Yet if one believes in the possibility of ahistoricism and further is not bothered by notions of accessibility and the "allographic", then the music could be compared to the yellow pages, published for A.T.&T., as that book finds a place in every home. And paging through the categories of telephone numbers inside, one notices that, alphabetically, they change slowly: "Automobile wrecking", "Aviation Consultants", and "Awnings and Canopies". This gradual transition is reflected in the handling of a slow transpositional process in the piece. Finally, the key of G major, around which the piece is based, is the colour of yellow, or at least a darkish burnt yellow.

MICHAEL TORKE
Programme note,
Goldberg Ensemble concert

Good night, sweet prince of cinema.
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
You have shuffled off your mortal coil,
Which we shall care for now.
May better realms await you.

"BRIEF CANDLE"
Advertised tribute to River Phoenix,
Daily Variety

While writing it (her novel *Ludwig*) I withdrew from the world for four-and-a-half years, wore only black and found myself so deeply immersed in the wild, formless sea of the unconscious that for a time I doubted I would ever see land again.

LESLIE KENTON
Elle

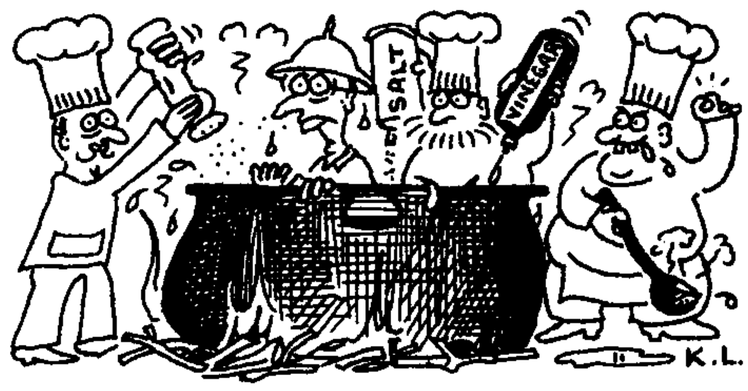
I often wonder whether *I* am a good neighbour. I do take great care to fit the music to the hour. Half a dozen Haydyn quartets played *con sordino* in the middle of a sleepless bout would not awake anyone, but my habit of talking to myself (I have always gone on the principle that anything I say must be more interesting than anything I hear) could be unnerving.

BERNARD LEVIN
The Times

The end of apartheid is opening up South Africa for full-scale PR development.

PR WEEK

Stew occupies a precarious place in the collective culinary subconscious. When the slow simmer of a potful of fo ,d makes an unctuous whole far greater than its parts, the dish has triumphed over the mundane, achieving an edible synthesis of a culture, be it Hungarian goulash or Creole gumbo. When, on the other

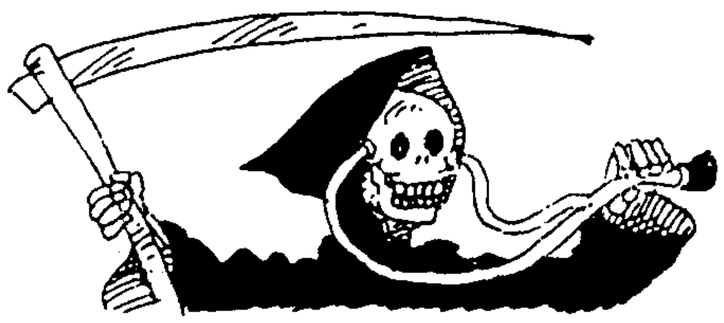


hand, a stew fails to reconcile disparate ingredients, it can be a poignant reminder of the limits of human effort, sad to think about, horrible to taste.

MOLLY O'NEILL
The New York Times Magazine

CONTRIBUTORS: M.Escreet, D.Luxner, Anon, D.Finkle, M.Daly, J.Parker

£10 paid for entries



DOING THE ROUNDS

THE inadequate resuscitation facilities in Liverpool hospitals first highlighted by sacked nursing student Kenneth MacDonald in 1991 (*Eye* 827) were further exposed in a study printed in the *British Medical Journal* shortly afterwards.

MacDonald complained that while working at **Walton and Fazakerley hospitals**, two patients were left to die when the cardiac arrest ("crash") team should have been called. The *BMJ* study of 297 patients at Fazakerley found that nearly a third of these were deemed *not for resuscitation* (NFR) by medical staff (usually in the absence of a consultant) and in only a third of these cases had the prognosis been discussed with relatives.

Nurses and doctors were sometimes unable to agree on whether to resuscitate, with the result that for five patients, the nurse didn't call the crash team even though the doctor wanted them to. MacDonald believes such cases could be tantamount to manslaughter and has asked the Mersey constabulary to investigate.

● "**BARNET health authority** wants to share your experiences of healthcare" — so claims a BHA brochure, *Enforcing your healthcare standards*, which sets out the rights of the patient's charter. One such right is "to be referred by a GP to a consultant who is acceptable to you". This is slightly at odds with the experience of a woman undergoing long-standing treatment for hearing difficulties at **Kingston hospital NHS trust** under consultant ENT surgeon Ian Fraser.

Mr Fraser last saw the woman in March 1993 and asked her to return for reassessment a year later. BHA's director of public health, Dr S. Farrow, then wrote to the woman's GP, Dr P.M. Bray, informing him that BHA does not have a contract with Kingston hospital and inviting him to justify the "extra contractual" appointment on clinical grounds. Dr Bray refused because he felt such information was confidential and his terms of service did not oblige him to supply it. Dr Farrow responded by cancelling the appointment. Dr Bray has now reported Dr Farrow to the general medical council for what he deems to be negligence. Meanwhile, Mr Fraser has agreed to see the patient again in his own time... for free.

● ON 10 DECEMBER, a man underwent a three-hour emergency operation for a perforated peptic ulcer at **London's University College Hospital**. Fifteen hours later, he awoke to be told that his bed was needed and he was to be transferred to **Middlesex hospital**. He was then given some valium and placed in a chair for two hours until a porter arrived. The porter was unable to find a wheelchair and transferred the patient to a commode on wheels and pushed him outside with just a pyjama top draped over his chest, to wait a further 10 minutes in a converted transit van. He then experienced a most uncomfortable journey to the Middlesex, where it took him a further eight days to recover.

● SIR William Staveley is to chair **North Thames regional health authority**, having briefly chaired **North East Thames RHA** and the **Royal London trust**. Prior to this he gained extensive experience of the NHS as first sea lord and chief of naval staff. Elsewhere, Martin Davies has been taken on as a management consultant by **Coventry health authority**. In 1992 he resigned with a £40,000 handshake as finance director at **West Midlands RHA** after making an unauthorised £300,000 loan to FIP, a computer company in financial difficulties.

● MICHAEL HOULTON MD FRCOG, clinical director of surgical services at **Weston area health trust** (motto: *"Providing local care"*) has written to patients to explain that their operations have been cancelled "because of the non-availability of a staffed and funded bed". And staff at **Wolverhampton's West Park** and **Penn hospitals** have left corpses in beds next to patients for up to eight hours because there are no night porters to move them.

● **THE Isle of Wight health commission**, the smallest of six in the Wessex region, has produced a mammoth two-volume purchasing plan in which it pledges to make the isle a "cataract-free zone" by the end of the financial year. This has come as something of a surprise to the IoW's sole consultant ophthalmic surgeon who has been asked to clear a list of 400 operations in seven weeks. His offer to do 100 has been deemed insufficient, and the commission is now sending its visually challenged elderly across the water to have their operations at huge public expense.

● PEOPLE are queuing to get in to **Birmingham General** — for the food. Every other hospital in the city has one chef for every hundred or so patients. But the General recently amalgamated with the **Accident Hospital** and had to close wards thanks to the usual multi-million pound cash shortages.

"I'm prescribing you an overdraft"

The result is that it has 11 chefs and fewer than 80 patients. The cooks are so bored they spend hours dreaming up feasts upon which staff and patients stuff themselves.

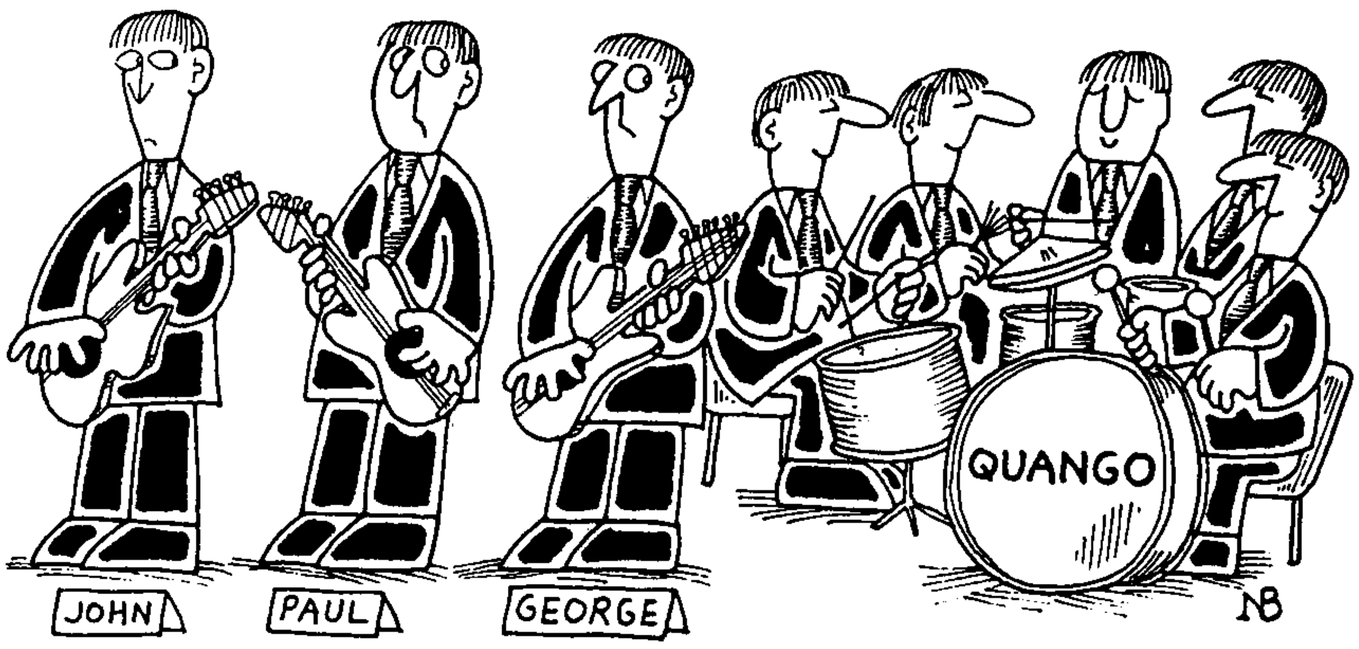
● LUCKILY, bosses at the **United Leeds teaching hospitals trust** are not suffering from the financial shortages that resulted in a brain-damaged patient being discharged into a private nursing home at a cost to his family of £16,000 a year. The trust has increased its fleet of company cars for managers from 15 in 1991 to 33 today.

● **WIGAN and Leigh health services NHS trust** is advertising for a £17,060 a year bed manager to track down empty beds. "A nursing background is desirable but not essential." **Thanet healthcare trust** is looking for a patient's charter manager "to join a highly motivated team who are committed to developing organisation wide continuous quality improvements alongside new developments..." And the **NHS management executive** has advertised for a £90,000 director of human resources "to provide top level support for ministers."

M.D.

APOLOGY TO DR D.C. MAWSON

We wish to apologise unreservedly to Dr David Mawson, Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist and former Medical Director of Moss Side Special Hospital, for our untrue account about him in this column on 31st December 1993. We said that Dr Mawson had been the former Director of Medical Services at Ashworth Special Hospital, that he had been sacked from that post in 1992 and that he had refused to co-operate with an Inquiry that had upheld allegations of mistreatment of patients by staff under his control. None of this is true and we apologise to Dr Mawson for the harm our article has caused to him. The Special Hospital Services Authority has confirmed to us its full support and respect to him in his present post.



JOBS FOR THE BOYOS

MORE from the Welsh Development Agency, the £170 million-a-year quango whose new chairman, David Rowe-Beddoe, inherits a can of worms from his discredited predecessor, Gwyn Jones.

Following the piece in the last *Eye* on Philip Head, the chief executive who presided over the squandering of £1.4 million of taxpayers' money on dodgy redundancy payouts, Rhodri Morgan, Labour MP for Cardiff West, has demanded to know what references — if any — the WDA gave Head's new quangoid employer, the Further Education Funding Council.

Head is now in charge of the council's property department (for £46,000 a year, plus exes), and was at the helm when the WDA appointed convicted conman Neil Smith to a £40,000-a-year marketing post without checking references — which were bogus anyway. Smith was later sentenced to two years inside for his deception.

If Row-Beddoe takes the axe to others at the top, more skeletons are likely to fall out of the closet.

Meanwhile, Mike Henry, booted out as finance director after the public accounts committee (PAC) reported on the WDA shenanigans, is taking the agency to an industrial tribunal, claiming unfair dismissal. He says he has been scapegoated and insists: "I fully intend to clear my name."

JOBS FOR THE McBOYS

THE SCOTS are an enterprising lot — especially in Forth Valley, where, like Fife (*Eye* 833), those handing public money out to "struggling" businesses seem keener to donate to companies whose directors sit on the enterprise board's management committee than to smaller firms with no links.

According to Forth Valley's annual report, BP in Grangemouth received £260,000 for "environmental improvements". Until recently BP's Ted Ferguson sat on the Forth Valley board.

Oil-rich BP seems an odd choice when public funds are at such a premium — especially since in Grangemouth the chemical giant imposes unusual conditions on those with whom it does business.

Contractors receiving government grants are obliged to hand over half the dosh to BP. And another clause forbids its contractors from talking to the press.

Even so, nobody could be sure where all BP's money went. It claimed it could account for only £60,000 of it, which had been spent on training. A thorough search then uncovered details of a £150,000 Forth Valley grant for tree planting, which had been refused. Eventually, eagle-eyed BP executives worked out that the tree-planting *had* taken place, but without their approval. As for the rest, nobody knows.

To give Ted Ferguson the benefit of the doubt, he may not have noticed all the tree-planting on his premises — nor the unexplained £50,000 set against BP in Forth Valley's register. He has now retired from BP and the Forth Valley enterprise board.

Letters

Private Eye

Lingerie for Men!

as seen on television!

AT LAST,
a complete range of lingerie designed just for men is now available!

From Camisoles and ckings, to Knickers and ts.

The stocking truth

Sir,

Under the circs. this is mind-bogglingly unfortunate! (Ad, EYE *839.)*

I realise that you have no control whatsoever over the timing and bizarre nature of events but it might perhaps be a good idea not to accept any further adverts for the time being from Apres Noir! (I'm sure this thought has already occurred to you.)

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely,
CHARLES LEE,

West Sussex.

Cowgill blues

Sir,

It was perhaps inevitable given the extreme and intemperate language that Tolstoy used in the offending pamphlet that Lord Aldington would win his case but his award of £1.5m is not the shining example of British justice that he would have us believe. Rather it is a monument to the lottery of our libel laws and a system that allows the creation of an atmosphere in court guaranteed to poison the minds of a jury.

Less well known to the public is Aldington's ruthless use of the law and the swingeing injunctions granted in his favour to suppress legitimate debate about the part he and others played in one of the worst crimes committed in this country's name this century, unless that is you accept the sanitized (and to the Establishment politically correct) Cowgill Report.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that four years on from the end of the trial Aldington finds himself being constantly sniped at. He is simply too deserving and too tempting a target.

Yours faithfully,
THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH,

Hampshire.

O·B·N

Lord Howe's criticisms of the Scott inquiry could apply equally to the Department of Trade and Industry inquiries which have been carried out over the years but neither Lord Howe nor any of the other witnesses before Lord Justice Scott has ever complained when businessmen have been condemned without a fair trial. Fortunately for us all, the chairman of this company, Mohamed Al Fayed, is presently challenging the inquisitional nature of DTI inspections at the European Court of Human Rights.

MICHAEL COLE
Director of Public Affairs
Harrods Limited
London SW1

Letter to Guardian

Submitted by Richard Guessard.

£10 paid for all submissions put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Porta-loser

Sir,

Our attention has been drawn to your heading of "Amazingly Sad Letter" for an item on the letters page of the issue dated 11 February 1994. We would like to point out that "Amazingly Sad Letter" is a registered trade mark of our company and should only be used to describe products manufactured and sold by us.

The letter you so headed did not in our opinion seem particularly sad (certainly not when compared to this one) and we would be obliged if you would refrain from using this description inappropriately.

Yours sincerely,
C.LEE-FARQUHAR,
Managing Director, The Amazingly Sad Letter Company, Ltd. 13a Portakabin Road, Portakabin Lane, Portakabinsville, Portakabinshire, PK1 FU2.

Lookalike

Bottomley

Batty

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the amazing resemblance between TV battleaxe Norah Batty and hospital-axer Virginia Bottomley MP? I'm sure they must be related.

Yours,
ENA B. SUMMERWINE.

Hyper activist

Sir,

*Sally Deedes has rather missed the point regarding the Sainsbury's in Alton (*EYE *839), which is neither a hypermarket nor out-of-town.*

It is not the opening of the inner relief road that had such a detrimental effect on trade in the High Street shops but the simultaneous introduction of a confused and unnecessary one-way system. Most residents and traders cannot understand why the impact of the inner relief road alone was not assessed before any decision was made regarding the proposed one-way system.

The proposed route of the new road had been known for many years and certainly long before Sainsbury's planned to come to Alton. Both the road and the supermarket were welcomed by the majority of residents in Alton and its surrounding villages.

Retail trade had been flagging for some time and it was felt that a quality supermarket would encourage shoppers back into the town where they would then also shop in the nearby High Street — some 100 yards away.

Alton is not "efficiently" by-passed by the A31. For those of us on the west side of town, it is not possible to gain access on to the A31 in order to go east — there is no slip-road.

Yours,
SALLY COX,

Hampshire.

Big Mucks

Sir,

To try and prove a point New Muckspreader suggests that the 16 year old with suspected CJD couldn't have got it from eating burgers as most teenagers eat them and haven't come down with the disease.

Instead, New Muckspreader plugs his/her own pet theory that BSE in cows or this poor 16 year old's disease is more likely to be due to exposure to pesticides.

I, of course, would never disagree that pesticides are an appalling cause of much illness, but as most of us are exposed to pesticides and most of us haven't come down with suspected CJD (yet) I can't see that New Muckspreader's theory holds any water.

What is interesting, though, is that this 16 year old worked at a kennels and would, I suggest, have fed the dogs. And what do most people feed their dogs? Why, that revolting discarded tinned or "fresh" meat that is considered unacceptable for human consumption.

*It has been shown (*DISPATCHES, *26 Jan) that a disproportionate number of people with CJD have worked with meat products, as butchers, farmers etc — now kennel maids? In other words, meat is still very much suspect in causing this terrible disease.*

Yours sincerely,
SARA STARKEY,

London NW3.

Lookalike

Major

Carvey

Sir,

I wonder if anyone has noticed the alarming similarity between our premier politician, John "I'm not worthy" Major and that successful thespian Dana Carvey?

Yours faithfully,
S.R. CREEDON,

South Woodford, E18.

Coal debunker

Sir,

Richard Courtney (Letters, 28 Jan) attempts to refute the statements made in your article about BACM.

However, I think you should be congratulated on the accuracy of this article: normally when you read in the press about something you know about, you find that only about half the article is correct. In this case, it is Courtney's letter that contains inaccuracies, half-truths and convoluted logic. For example, Courtney denies the (true) fact that Bulmer is being provided with time by his employer to fulfil his duties as a trades union president, then goes on to say that employers often provide such time.

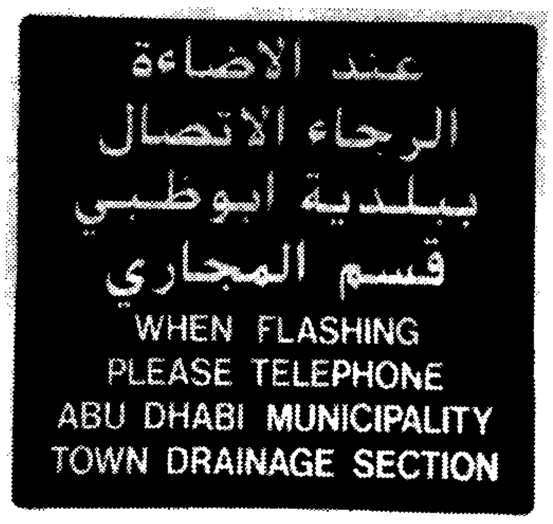
Yours faithfully,
CATHERINE GOUNDRY,

Nottinghamshire.

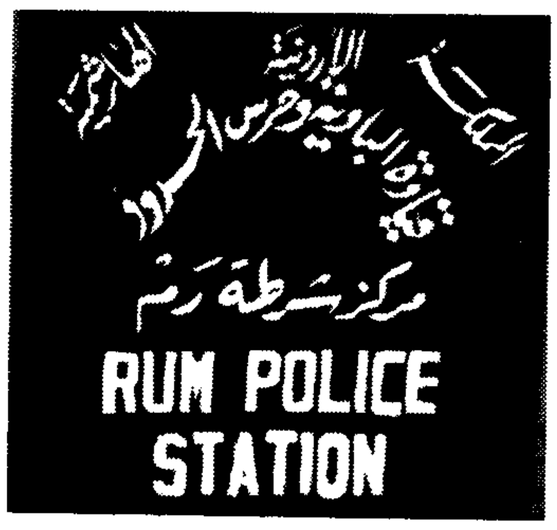
● *SEVERAL readers have asked how to contribute to Peggy Woods' fighting fund in her battle with the forces of darkness and oppression at the Law Society. Cheques, made out to Peggy Wood, can be sent to her care of Private Eye.*

I-SPY

Durban, S. Africa



Abu Dhabi



Wadi Rum, Jordan

Submitted by Canon J. Cunnane, Jonathan Kaplan, M.G. Rice. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Unforgiven

Sir,

So now we hear from Hunt News (EYE *839) that a* LONE *Old Surrey & Burstow member has seen off a* PACK *of your brave saboteurs. Unless Clint Eastwood has secretly joined the hunt, this is stretching the bounds of credibility to the limit and even the most half-witted of your readers will spot the inconsistency. Why not try to get the facts even half right?*

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM A. SCOTT,
Blackheath.

Pyrotechnical fault

Sir,

May I correct a number of inaccuracies in your colour section (EYE *839).*

I have NEVER *been involved in any shape or form with supplies of arms to Jordan or Iraq.*

In 1985 I stood down as managing director of Unwin Pyrotechnics Limited.

The company was the principal supplier of special pyrotechnic effects for the London Royal Tournament, various Bond films and television programmes. The producer of the Royal Tournament, Major Michael Parker, requested a supply of fireworks and special effects for a similar tattoo in Amman, which he had been asked to produce.

With regard to attending "arms fairs" with Denis and Mark Thatcher — I was once and only once a guest at a flying display in Middle Wallop with many others and happened to find myself seated at the same lunch table as the Thatchers. I have never had any dealings whatsoever with either.

Referring to the contract for simulators for the Nigerian army — this again was a supply of special effects for a National Day celebration. The contract actually saved about 40 jobs at the former Paines fireworks factory.

Yours faithfully,
R.J.R. UNWIN,
London SW7.

Down and out

Sir,

I was disgusted by your use of the filthy caricature of Gillian Taylforth saying "Do you think I'll go down?" in last week's Eye. This sort of smut belongs on the cover of your organ, not hidden away where only your readers will see it.

Yours,
SCOTT DOUGHTY,
Birmingham.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"He really had to wrap his head around that cross."
COMMENTATOR, BBC1
(PE Stubbs)

"It's a very flat three-man back four."
GORDON COX, BBC Radio Cleveland
(Paul Addison)

Caller: *I have the autograph of Horatio Nelson.*
Expert: *And what does it say exactly?*
Caller: *It says 'Horatio Nelson'.*
LBC
(Jerry Wilson)

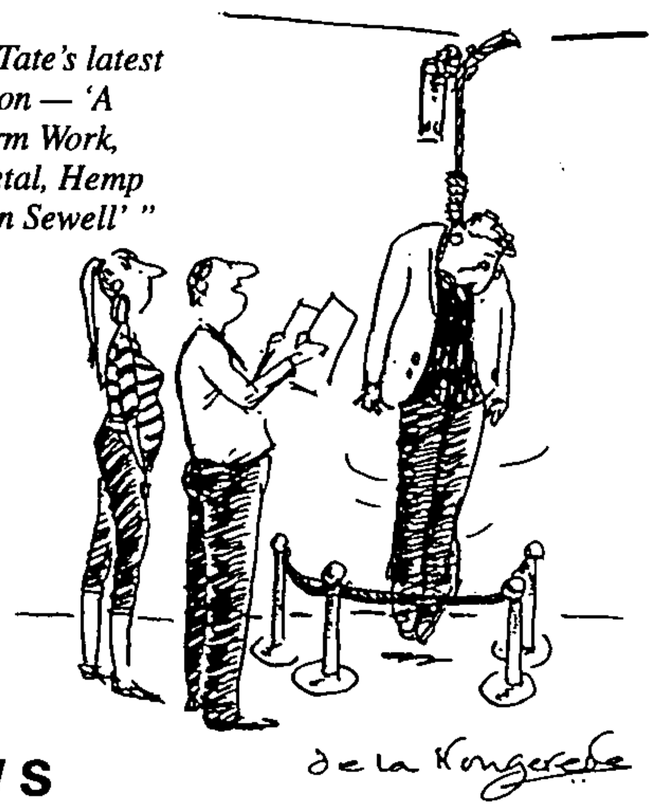
"We live in a world where the Kelloggs Cornflake family is ever less rare."
VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY, ITN
(J. Ince)

"I understand the man is Asian, but is there any other reason why he shot at the Prince of Wales?"
RICHARD LITTLEJOHN, LBC
(Vicki Horne)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

"It's the Tate's latest acquisition — 'A Free-Form Work, using Metal, Hemp and Brian Sewell' "



ART NEWS

THE IMMINENT arrival of bow-tied poodlefaker Lord Gowrie at the helm of the Arts Council has occasioned rejoicing throughout the land — but nowhere more so than at the Royal College of Art, whose provost just happens to be... Lord Gowrie.

Staff at the college hope this umbilical link will ensure a continuing flow of Arts Council dosh in their direction.

The college already hosts a massively subsidised two-year training programme in art gallery administration on behalf of the Arts Council's visual arts panel, whose chairman is another Royal College man, spaghetti-western expert Professor Christopher Frayling. The course was launched by the Arts Council in 1992 following worldwide "research" by its then visual arts director, Sandy Nairne, who is now at the Tate.

Few outside the magic world of the Arts Council and its satellites could see the need for such a course. The UK over-produces gallery staff already, with three of its postgraduate training programmes rated among the best in the world (those at the universities of Manchester, Essex and St Andrews).

However, students emerging from these were plainly gravely deficient, having wasted their time developing connoisseurship and independent judgement rather than learning parrot-fashion the culture-speak favoured by the Arts Council and the Tate.

Even worse, those at St Andrews study under Professor Martin Kemp, who in 1988 resigned as a trustee of the Victoria & Albert Museum in protest at Elizabeth Esteve-Coll's plans to wreck the place. One of Esteve-Coll's keenest supporters among the trustees was none other than Christopher Frayling.

Frayling's and Gowrie's Royal College of Art instantly answered the appeal from Frayling's Arts Council panel to set up the course at the RCA on an externally-financed basis. Arts Council and Tate staff do most of the teaching (during their working hours), while Sandy Nairne's spouse, who teaches cultural studies at Middlesex Polytechnic (sorry, university) has arranged for her department to teach the theoretical bits from an equally reliable perspective.

The course leader is one Teresa Gleadowe, a former press officer from the Tate. Her appointment caused some surprise, since she is not conspicuously blessed with experience either as an art teacher or as a curator. Still, she has access to plenty of good advice: she is the mistress of Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate, who was one of the people most closely involved in setting up the RCA course.

Unfortunately, a shadow has fallen over this cosy set-up since last summer's investigation into the Arts Council by Price Waterhouse, which found that no fewer than a third of the council's staff were spending all or part of their time on "training" — ie promoting, recruiting for and administering the Royal College course.

Price Waterhouse recommended this should cease. To make matters worse, in November heritage secretary Peter Brooke ordered the council to cut £600,000 from its admin costs and give the money to the arts rather than its own staff, thus endangering the very survival of the course.

It is to be hoped that milord Gowrie, himself a former Tory arts minister, will be able to fend off this threat.

GLENDA SLAGG

She's so hot the ice melts!!

HARTLEY BOOTH!?!? He's the lyrical Lothario from Westminster who couldn't even get his leg over!?!?

Come off it, Mister Sadact?!? 'oo are ya tryin' to kid?!! If all you did with little Miss "Research Assistant" was just a-kissin' and a-cuddlin' then why'dya resign?!! Eh?!? Call yourself a *lay* preacher?!? I don't think!?!? Is a few old poems a resigning issue?!! Hartley!?! Geddit?!?!!

SPARE A thought for poor old Hartley Booth!!?! He's the MP wh[illegible] only crime was to write a few tend[illegible] verses to the gal he loves!?! And now he's resigned because Miss Kiss'n'Cuddle'n'Tell has gone and blabbed to the Sunday Mirror!?!!

Put a sock in it, kid, and give poor old Hartley a quickie!?!? *(Shurely 'a break'? Ed.)*

DENNIS SKINNER!?!? Or 'Sinner' to you, Mister?!? What a humbug!?! All the time he was a-jeerin' and a-sneerin' at the Tories he was up west in a posh pad giving little Miss Research Assistant a lesson in socialism?!?

Blimey! Talk about Reds under the Beds!?!? Now it's Reds in them, thanks to Dennis the Menace!?!

SEEN *Schindler's List*?

HERE they are, Glenda's Lent Lovelies:

DANNY BAKER. OK, everyone else has turned off!?! But you turn me on with your Estuary accent and Cockney jokes?!?!! I'm your Radio One listener!?!?

STPEHEN OJOMO. Mmmm! I'll give him a try in the scrum any day!?!?

NICHOLAS SOAMES. OK, so you're fat and you can't throw a pancake!?!!! You can come round to my place for a toss!?! *(You're fired. Ed.)*

Byeeeeee!

TEN TELL-TALE SIGNS THAT THE WAR IN BOSNIA IS OVER

1. The Serbs are still in control.
2. The Russians are backing them.
3. The West hasn't done anything.
4. And they're not going to either.
5. That's definite.
6. So that's really shown the Serbs.
7. They won't try anything again in a hurry.
8. What was that noise?
9. Sounds like artillery to me.
10. Er...

THAT LETTER FROM YOUR BANK MANAGER — HOW IT WILL LOOK

Dear The Late Mr —— [Insert name here]

I am sorry to hear of your recent death as a result of receiving my last letter, viz the one informing you that you are £1.75p in arrears.

However I note from our records that this sum is still outstanding and including interest you now owe the bank £1001.75p.

In addition there is a ten pound surcharge for this letter of condolence.

Yours faithfully,
MR A. BASTARD, FCIB,
Under Manager.

P.S. May we recommend the new Barclays Funeral Services?

101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR

WINDSCREEN WIPERS

This Week's Honorary Degrees

Mr Christopher Evans, the broadcaster, has been awarded a D. Phil. in Clinical Psychology by the University of Wanstonia *(formerly East Ham Polytechnic)*.

Miss Jenny Seagrove has also been made a Doctor of Philosophy at Kenwright University, Liverpool *(formerly Winner Polytechnic)*.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

O "I've made some weird arrests in my time but this even beats the woman shoplifting with a rabid donkey for protection last month," Sergeant Paulo Quadros of the Belo Ilorizonte police force told reporters. "This time, it took twelve of us, including eight firemen, and we had to take a dozen floorboards into custody as well."

Sergeant Quadros was answering questions about the arrest of Sergio De Sa, on charges of aggravated theft. "De Sa is a glue sniffer, who steals from shops to feed his habit. On Saturday night he broke into the Gola Gola glue factory, but he lost control when he saw the really good stuff, and started inhaling directly from the vats. Of course, he was overcome by fumes after one sniff and lost his balance, upsetting a vat of glue as he fell. By the time he came round, he was stuck to the floor, and had to lie there helplessly till the workers turned up on Monday morning. They couldn't shift him and, in the end, we had to get power saws and cut round him. The factory's lost a day's production and he's lost the skin off his back.

"While we were formally charging him, he said it was worth losing his skin because Gola Gola Quickstix was the *premier cru* of glue. What is it with these people? Are they nuts? Last month, we arrested another guy with tubes stuck right up both nostrils. He died in custody. Somebody called him Walrus Face, and he laughed so much he haemorrhaged." *(O Globo, 2/11/93. Spotter — John Cheetham)*

— O —

O "No doubt about it, you don't want to catch *Koro*," Dr Cheng Sheung-tak told a conference on Social Welfare in Southern China, "never mind about a poor sex life, you'd need a microscope to go to the lavatory."

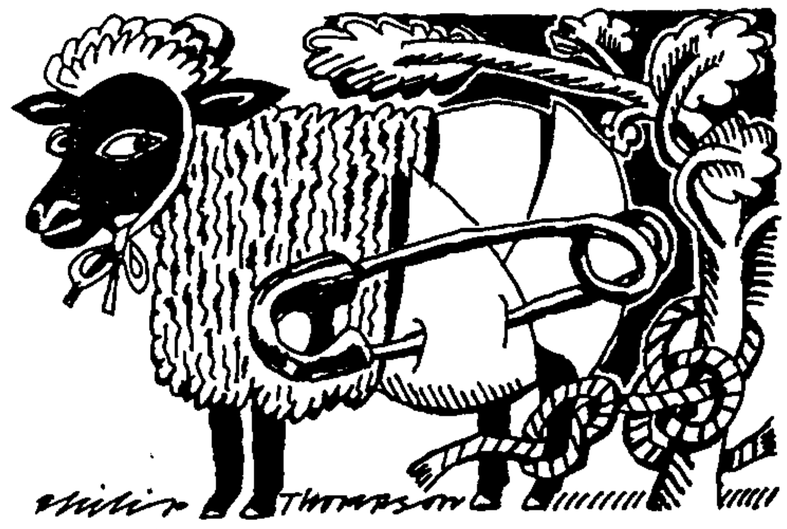
Dr Cheng, a lecturer at Hong Kong City Polytechnic, gave details of a recent outbreak of *Koro* on Hainan Island. "Over 3,000 people were affected by the dreadful epidemic, which made their sexual organs shrink dramatically. Penises retracted, breasts shrivelled, nipples inverted, and some even had their ears, nose and tongue vanish inside their bodies. Men were clamping their penises to trees then running away, while women tied bricks to their nipples to stop them disappearing. Neighbours would rush to "help out" by tugging at the affected parts.

"A waste of time. Their efforts were useless, resulting only in bruising, bleeding and, very often, death. There was even a rumour going about that applying sick to the affected part was a cure. No way. I am a man of science, and I tell you that *Koro* is caused by the impish fox spirit stealing the patient's vital energy, and can only be cured by *Dr Cheng's Ointment*, made from stag antlers, deer tail, and deer and seal penis. Remember, the efficacy of *Dr Cheng's* in combating *Koro* has been attested to again and again, and it is your solemn duty as social workers to recommend it to every family in China." *(Hong Kong Sunday Post, 28/11/93. Spotter — John Warham)*

— O —

O *"Is there no justice left in Taita Taveta?" demanded Peter Wambugu Mugo in Nyahururu central court. "You accuse me of wickedness, but if I'd killed the sheep and sold it to the butcher, you'd all have queued up to buy a bit."*

Inspector Odhiambo, prosecuting, told the court how Mugo, who was accused of abducting a sheep and having carnal knowledge of it, had been caught in flagrante delicto. "The complainant left his four sheep grazing but, on returning later, found only three. Searching in a nearby copse, he saw the missing sheep tethered to a bush, dressed in a nappy and a baby bonnet, with the madman Mugo standing behind it, naked, singing a lullaby and thrusting in time to the music. The alarm was raised and he was overpowered by furious members of the public."



Defending himself, Mugo told the Senior Resident Magistrate, Mrs Manjiru Karanja, that he had decided to go with animals because he could no longer afford VD treatment. "Five times I go with women, five times I get VD" he declared. "It is time people realised that animals are safer and cheaper."

Mugo also pleaded not guilty to a charge of urinating into an ashtray in Barclay's Bank, Voi Town, claiming that he had a weak bladder and was being held prisoner by the bank manager at the time. He was found guilty on all counts, fined Sh800, and sentenced to two years imprisonment plus two strokes of the cane. (Kenya Times, 23/11/93. Spotter — Shaun Williams)

Compiled by

Victor Lewis-Smith

2 Million Years Ago

THE TIMES

Snow chaos as country grinds to a halt

WHITE hell gripped most of the world last night as an unexpected cold snap threatened to bring the planet to an end.

Dinosaurs were cancelled, flights of pteranodons were grounded and multiple pile-ups of mammoths were reported as thousands of feet of snow fell everywhere.

And the metmen say there's worse to come!

"This chilly spell," said Michael Icthyosaur, "could last as long as a million years. So wrap up warm!"

But there was fury amidst early men at the disruption caused by the wintry weather. Said one furious commuter: "I was hoping to walk over to North Africa but I suppose I'll just have to stay here in Eurasia."

"Honestly," he continued "this country is pathetic. The first sign of an ice age and everything falls to pieces!"

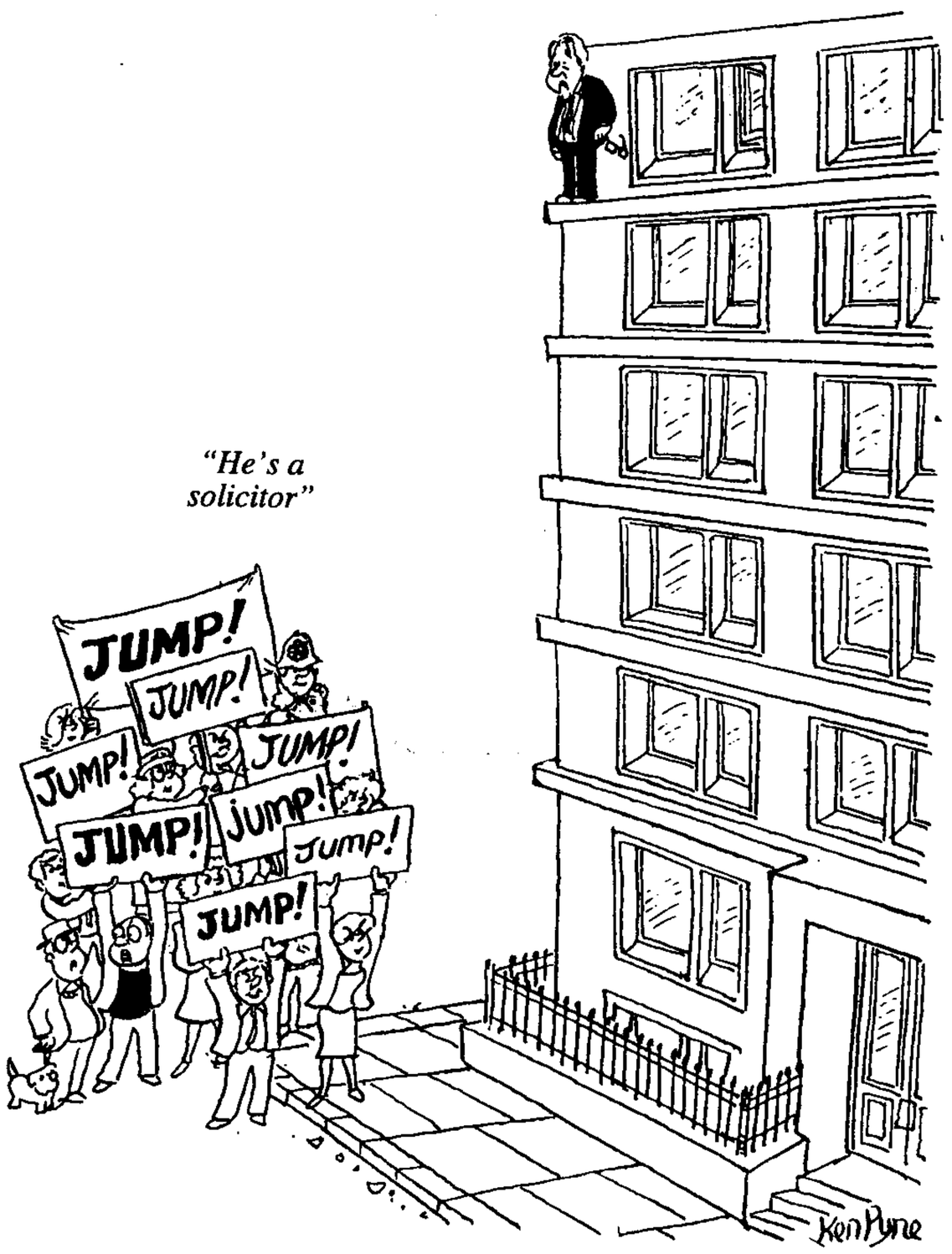
ON OTHER PAGES

Why oh why is it so cold? asks Professor Norman Stoneage

The age of homo sapiens should be reduced, says Matthew Parris

How my sabre-toothed tiger is coping, explains Lynne Truss

"He's a solicitor"



The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Monday

I not inconsiderably annoyed with yet another of my MPs. This one has died, thereby causing a by-election. As I told Sir Norma Fowler, this is something that we do not want until the public realises how well my Back to Basics policy is working. Sir Norma looked at me in a peculiar fashion and said: "Ahem, I wouldn't worry about the by-election, prime minister. I think the result of that is a foregone conclusion."

"That is very reassuring," I told him.

Tuesday

The newspapers have completely missed the point yet again. They say that the dead MP means the end of my "Back to Basics" policy. Why should it be? They could not be more wrong. I never said that Back to Basics was to do with eating oranges and putting bags over your head. If you go through my famous Conference speech last year, you will not find a single reference to men wearing women's underwear or eating any sort of fruit. Oh no. I was very pleased when Mr Meyer told me that I had already made a press statement to this effect, saying that Back to Basics was about:

1. Widening the M25 to 14 lanes.
2. Increasing the fines for users of the deadly cannabis drug to £25,000 (this is a brilliant idea of Mr Howard's).
3. VAT on everthing.

Wednesday

Yet another of my ministers seems to have resigned. Apparently the reason is that he didn't have an affair with his researcher. When I told this to my wife Norman, she said: "Well in that case you should resign, too, "for not having an affair with that cook."

"You have missed the point," I replied, giving her one of my stern looks. "I didn't write any silly poetry, unlike Mr Hartley Booth. Listen to this one...

"Labour is red, Tories are blue,
I'm an MP
Your place or mine?"

Thursday

I have finally lost my patience with all the papers. How can they possibly link Mr Booth's personal tragedy over his researcher with my Back to Basics campaign? Look back at my conference speech and you will not find even the tiniest reference to the writing of love poems or the cuddling of research assistants in bed at night. I was very pleased when Mr Meyer showed me an article I had written for this morning's Daily Express, which made exactly this point — i.e. that Back to Basics is about:

1. Privatising the railways.
2. Closing down Guy's Hospital (this is a brilliant idea of Bottomley's).
3. Building a much-needed dam in Malaysia to help the Third World.

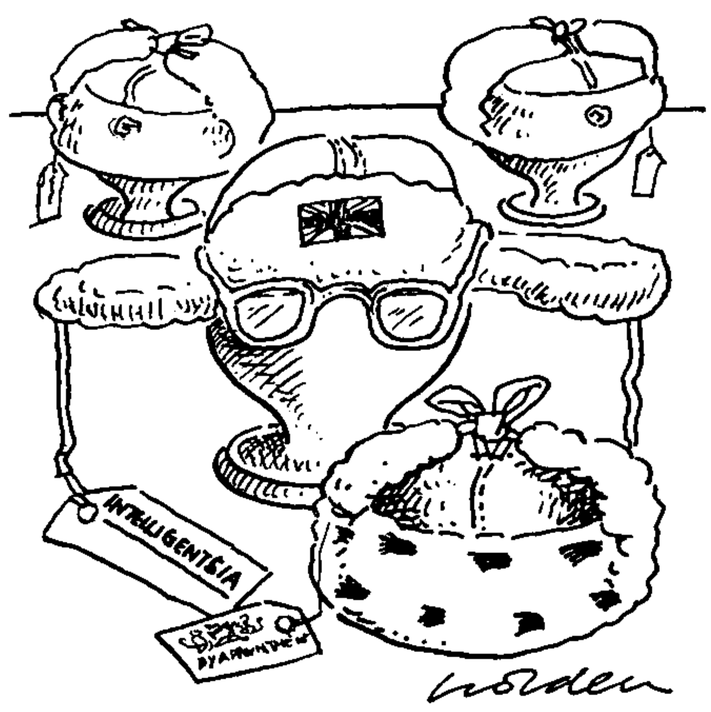
Mr Meyer also told me that I was flying out to Russia this evening to be photographed with Mr Yeltsin.

"Why?" I asked him.

"To show people," he explained, "that there is more to Majorism than just men writing poems and putting bags over their heads."

Friday

It is very cold in Russia, and Mr Meyer has given me a special fur hat to wear. When I asked him: "Is it to keep my head warm?", he said: "No, it is so



that people will take photographs of you and compare you to real statesmen like Mr Macmillan."

Poor Mr Yeltsin has a very bad cold and at our meeting he kept swigging cough mixture from a bottle marked 90 proof. But we soon got down to serious negotiation about how to bolster up Mr Yeltsin's popularity. "What I really need," he told me, "is to be visited by a really important and respected world-figure from your country, like your prime minister Mrs Thatcher. Or if she is busy, your Queen."

Saturday

Today I flew back after my historic diplomatic triumph in agreeing to allow the Queen to visit Russia. When I got home there was a message on my answerphone from my brother Terry, who is writing a book about our family history, and wants to know if I have done anything interesting that ought to be in it.

I was just thinking what would be suitable for him to include when Mr Waldegrave came in looking very pleased and told me that he had just personally taken a call on our new Charterline. This is the 37th call in only six months, and Mr Waldegrave has worked out that each call only costs the taxpayer £11,426, which is surely a bargain in anyone's book!

This call was from a lady in Heckmondwyke who put her money in a stamp machine but nothing came out because the machine was empty. Mr Waldegrave was able to tell her that since Post Office Counter Services was now a quango, it was not the government's business and so he could not help her. Nevertheless he would arrange for her to be sent a new Charter booklet called You and Your Post Office, plus details of how she could get counselling for customers involved in Post-Post Office Traumatic Stress Situations. I must remember to tell my brother to have a whole chapter in his book on how I started the Citizen's Charter. Who says I have no ideas? First the Charterline, then Back to Basics. Whatever will I think of next?

Sunday

There is a strange message on my answerphone from Mrs Thatcher, telling my wife Norman that she must not wear State jewels that do not belong to her. I told the machine firmly that my wife can wear whatever she likes. That certainly shut her up. All she could do was say the same thing over and over again, just like she did when she was Prime Minister. Then she let out a high-pitched whine. How pathetic! I must tell Norma not to wear the jewels ever again.

Mr Clarke has been on Desert Island Discs, which I have been on first, and I have to say his choice of records was in my judgement very poor indeed. He had one record by a Monk and another one by Little Richard, who is a journalist on the Sun. It shows that he is completely out of touch. Yet he says that he wants to be Prime Minister! I told Norman as we listened to it that Mr Clarke came over as an absurd figure.

"Unlike this?" she asked, holding up a picture of me in Russia. Her loyalty is in no small measure gratifying.

Monday

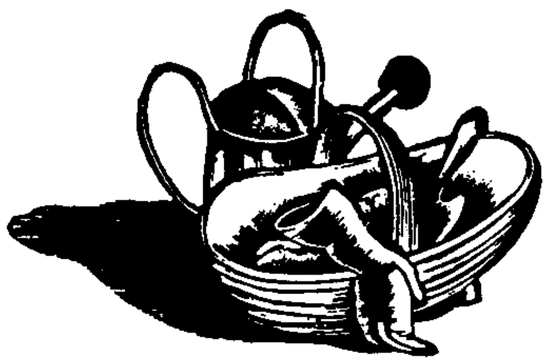
Mr Hurd came to see me with some good news from Bosnia. He says that we do *not* have to bomb the Serbs after all, which we did not want to do anyway but which Mr Clinton told us we had to. Apparently, Mr Hurd says, all the Serbian guns have been moved away from the hills around Sarajevo.

"Where are they now?" I asked him.

"They've gone to bomb Muslims in Tuzla and Bihac," he told me.

"That'll show them we mean business," I told him in my Getting Tough voice.

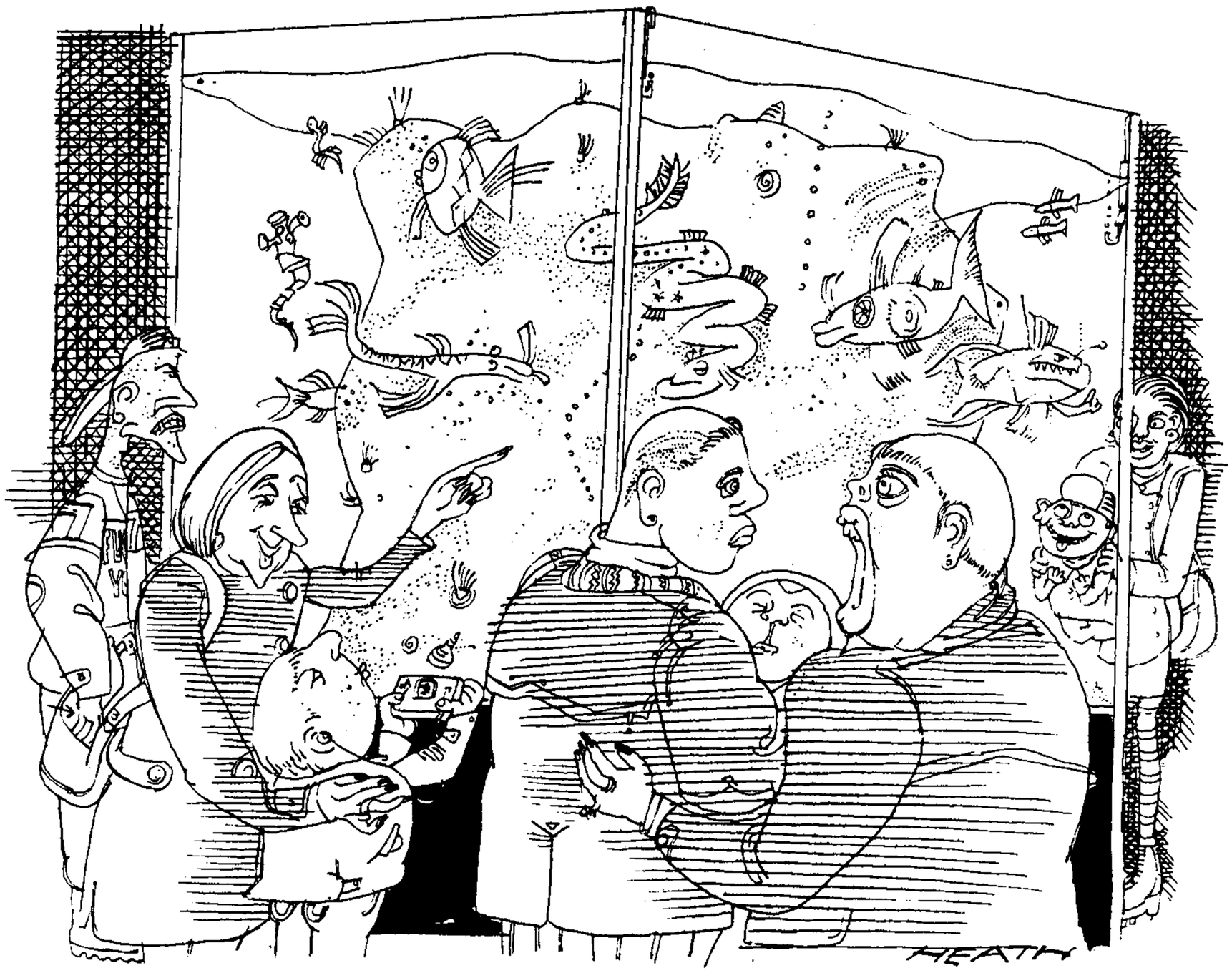
Gardeners' Question Time



And now, another problem for the team...

A listener writes: I have a strong and healthy shrub in my garden which gives pleasure all the year round. However, because it has been growing in the same place for 37 years, my neighbour, a Mr John Birt, has advised me to dig it up, throw it away and replace it with dandelions. What should I do?

The experts reply: Take no notice of Mr Birt. Most gardeners like to dig in their manure, but Mr Birt prefers to heap it up on people. We suggest you give him a fishing rod and use him as a garden gnome.



Great Bores Of Today.

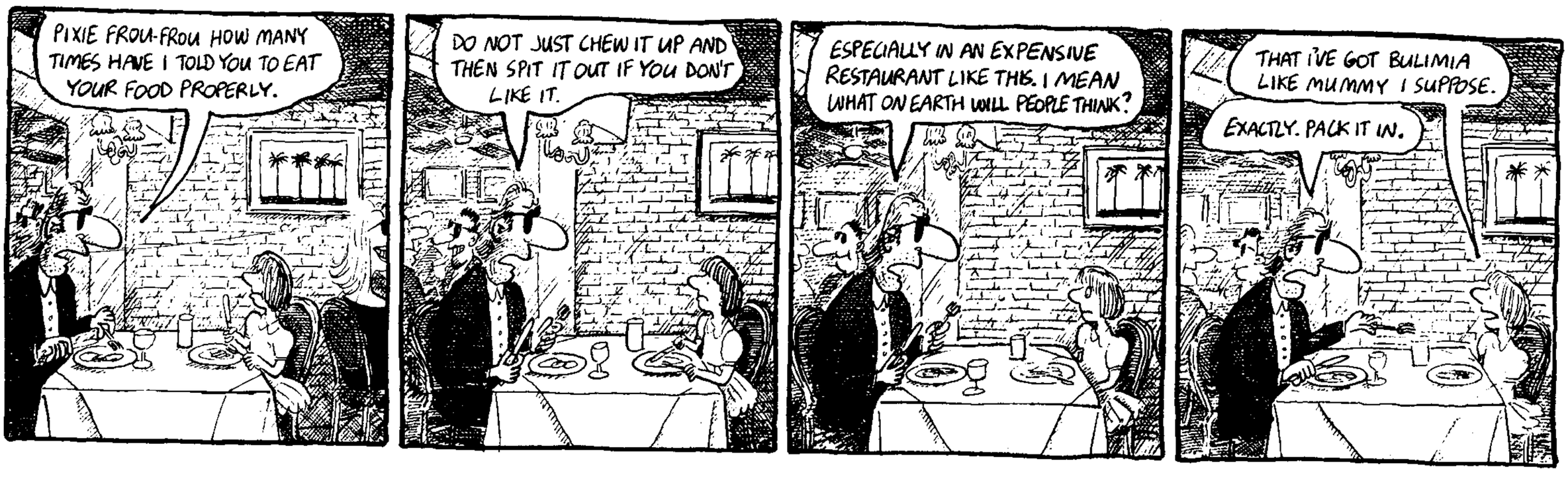
"... I can't understand why people go in the first place especially if they haven't got the proper training for it I mean just 'cause you've got the equipment doesn't mean you can survive the sub-arctic temperatures with the chill factor of anything up to minus you know forty or whatever and it can be clear blue sky one minute and the next it can be like a blizzard no wonder people get into trouble and the cost of the rescue is astronomical they are undermanned apparently and most of them are volunteers and these people are put at risk by the thoughtlessness of some idiots who for no particularly good reason decide they want to be mountaineers if you look at Switzerland you have to have a certificate to go climbing it's a dangerous sport and I think you should definitely pay for the rescuers not just sell your story to the tabloids that woman the other day got 40 grand apparently it's disgusting don't forget I've got *Middlemarch* on tape we can watch it this evening that yellow fish is dead..."

WASH & GET OFF
Dual action that first cleans areas soiled by poets and then helps deter them from further unwanted fouling and territorial marking both indoors and out.
375ml
GET019 (6) £3.75

Catalogue entry

Celeb

LIGGER


PIXIE FROU-FROU HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU TO EAT YOUR FOOD PROPERLY.
DO NOT JUST CHEW IT UP AND THEN SPIT IT OUT IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT.
ESPECIALLY IN AN EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT LIKE THIS. I MEAN WHAT ON EARTH WILL PEOPLE THINK?
THAT I'VE GOT BULIMIA LIKE MUMMY I SUPPOSE.
EXACTLY. PACK IT IN.

NEW TORY SHOCKER ROCKS MAJOR

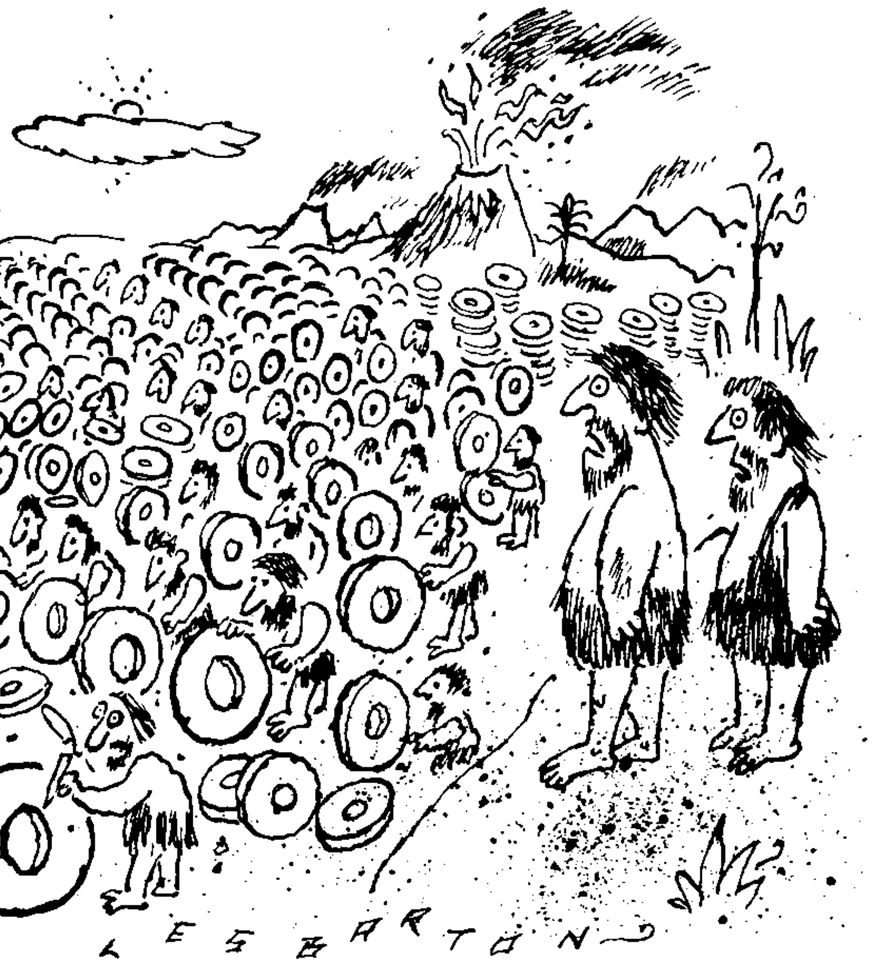
by Our Political Staff
Lunchtime O'Booth

TORY morale sank to a new low yesterday when it was revealed that a Conservative MP had been found alive at home wearing men's clothing.

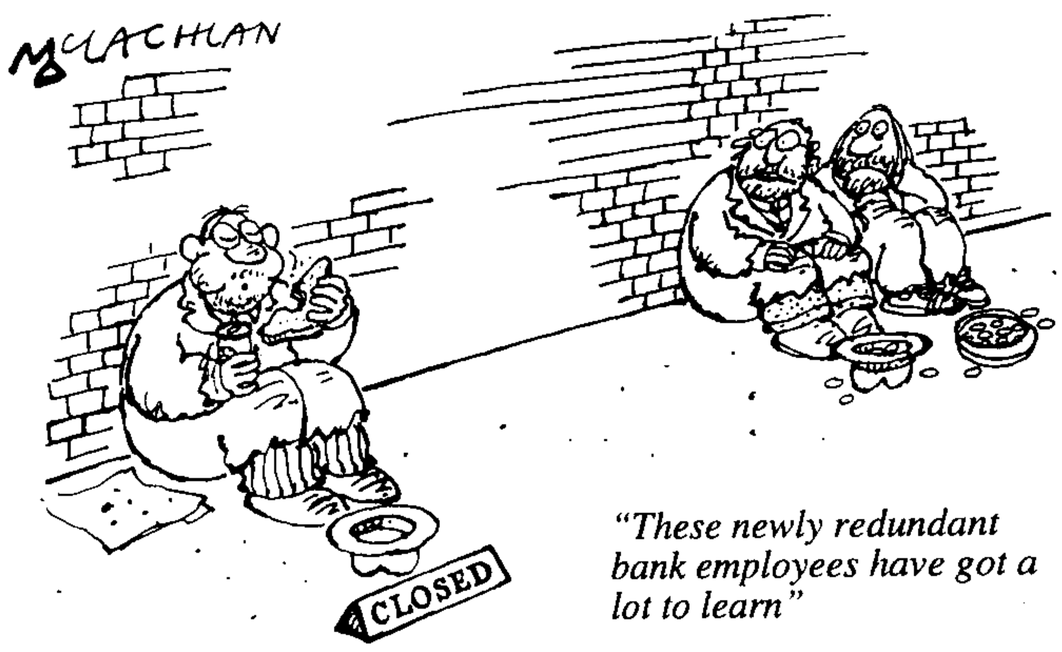
The MP, who was not named, is believed to have been watching television at the time in the company of his wife.

A police spokesman confirmed that a series of poems were not found near his body nor were there any men sharing his bed.

Said Conservative Chairman Sir Norman Fowler: "I am speechless. I have no idea what to say. This is a very rare event and it must be taken in context. It will certainly not divert us from our Back to Basics campaign."



"We'll have to lay off some workers — supply has exceeded demand"



"These newly redundant bank employees have got a lot to learn"

BBC2 Tonight

7.30 **Eastenders.** Frank buys a Picasso in the market, but Arthur says his eight-year old could have done better.

8.15 **A Question of Sport.** Bill Beaumont and Ian Botham try to identify pictures from Picasso's Blue Period.

9.00 **40 Minutes.** Man with beard talks about Picasso for forty minutes.

9.40 **Another 40 Minutes.** Same man, same beard, more Picasso.

10.20 **Absolutely Fabulous.** Patsy has a dream in which she sleeps with Picasso, with hilarious results. Guest starts George Melly, Brian Sewell, Maggi Hambling and the man with the beard from the previous programme.

10.40 **Middlemarch.** A surprise for Dorothea when Will Ladislaw says that he has invented Cubism.

11.00 **The Late Show.** Is there too much Picasso on television? Sara Dunant talks to Nick Serota, Will Self and the man with the beard who appeared earlier.

12.45 a.m. Late Film. **Les Demoiselles d'Avignon,** starring Catherine Deneuve, Gerard Depardieu and Henri Matisse as "the man with the beard". *(That's enough Picasso, Ed)*

Land Rover has long been coveted by rival carmakers, but they have been unable to unlock the key, because British Leyland and, more recently, British Aerospace have been unwilling to separate it from the previously chronically loss-making Rover car operations.

Financial Times

Sailing

Smith breaks foot in third leg

Grauniad

The Stephen Milligan I Knew

by All Hacks (Exclusive to all papers)

I REMEMBER the first time I met Stephen. It was when we were working together on the Economist foreign desk. Or was it in the corridor of the Sunday Times? Or maybe it was at the BBC in the '80s. No, I tell I lie, it was at Oxford. I knew even then that one day Stephen would be... immensely likeable... sense of humour... high-flyer... dark side... great loss... terrible tragedy... anyway, the important thing is that I did actually know him. And now he's front page news. And I knew him.

© All Hacks, 1994

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber

I CAN'T WAIT 'TIL THE WEDDING!
CLICK
CLICK
JUST THINK- I'LL BE MARRIED TO THE BASS PLAYER OF ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST EVER ROCK BANDS!
WHAT DOES HE EARN?
ABOUT FIVE MILLION A YEAR...
SO I'LL HAVE TO SUPPORT US FOR A WHILE UNTIL HE STARTS MAKING A DECENT LIVING!
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
Kerber

From the immortal pen of SYLVIE KRIN, author of Born to be Queen *and* Heir of Sorrows, *comes...*

IN THE LINE OF FIRE

THE STORY SO FAR: Prince Charles is delighted with the success of his visit to Australia and New Zealand.

Now read on...

"MARVELLOUS. Brilliant. Super, sir," beamed the dark-haired Melissa Harpie, Charles's perfectly formed public relations executive consultant, as she leafed through a huge pile of press cuttings.

"Look at this one, sir," she gushed "a whole double-page spread in the South Auckland Weekly Advertiser."

Charles smiled with satisfaction. Yes, Melissa had done her job awfully well and so, come to think of it, had his cousin Lord Linley who had converted Diana's old study at Highgrove into this wonderful new command centre thingie for his fresh start in public life. Gone were the rows of garish videos and boxes of cassette-tapes for Diana's walkman. Gone were those posters of men with long hair and guitars and so forth. He shuddered involuntarily. But all that nonsense had disappeared and in its place was this exciting dynamic work module, as his designer cousin David had called it. And it truly *was* impressive. There were computer screens and lap-tops and even wall charts showing all Charles's engagements for a whole year. There were telephones with special buttons to connect him directly to Dr Barkworth or Sir Laurens Van der Post if he instantly required advice about Shakespeare.

"I was saying, sir, that there's no doubt that you have won over the press. It's *definitely* a new start." Melissa broke his reverie and tapped the keys expertly on the Quorn 1000 Ram Meltdown. A multi-coloured spreadsheet template appeared on the 40-inch monitor.

"See for yourself, sir. The red column represents your coverage and the blue column is Diana's. Effectively she is minus-35% over the seven-week period whereas you have recorded a plus factor of nearly 78%. And if we break that down further..."

She fingered another key deftly and a pie-chart appeared with Charles's photograph superimposed on the top. He stared at the screen in amazement. It was just like the news on the television when someone had won an election or something. This was modern monarchy at work. Himself at the interface of technology and tradition. What was it Sir Laurens had said? Well, he would ring him at once with his new telephonic device to find out. Charles stabbed the button marked "Sir L.V.D.P." and within seconds he heard the old sage's voice as if he was there in the room.

"You have reached the desk of Sir Laurens Van der Post. I am not here. But you hear my voice. So in once sense I am here. But I am not. Speak after the bleep..."

At this point, Sir Alan Fitztightly entered with a discreet cough, carrying a silver tray of Charles's elevenses. These consisted as usual of two zinc-enriched charcoal oatcakes from the royal farm in Poundbury and a small pot of wholemeal yoghurt coffee.

"Congratulations on your brilliant tour of the Antipodes, sire. Mrs Waldegrave and I watched you every night on the television. Such a refreshing change from seeing that woman to whom you were married at one stage, if you don't mind me saying."

"Yes, I thought so too," Charles concurred. "Did you see my speech to the Maori Tribesman at Bunjeejumpa Bay? It was a very moving occasion... they'd come hundreds of miles trekking along the songlines and they don't need maps... you see it's absolutely amazing and I told them all about Grandmother, this wise old woman beyond the sea..."

Fitztightly interrupted him, rather rudely Charles thought.

"We liked the bit where that man tried to shoot you. You were so brave, sire. Mrs Waldegrave thought you were just like Clint Eastwood..."

Charles ignored his equerry's interjection.

"No, it was my lecture at Greer University in New South Wales that really endeared me to the people. I linked the survival of the threatened Tasmanian Pepsi Koala Bear to the need to preserve the old 1667 Prayerbook. It was a very striking link — Cranmer and the bear — and it obviously touched a chord with the media. Don't you think Melissa?"

The exquisitely dressed Girl Friday pulled a sheet from the printer and showed it to Charles. "This is a graph of your popularity during the tour." At first sight it looked like a drawing of two huge mountains in the Himalayas.

"And what are those two peaks then?" Charles inquired.

"Peak A is where the man came at you with the starting pistol. And Peak B is where the other man tried to spray stuff all over you. Good isn't it? We really want to build on this."

Charles was confused.

"Build on it? What on earth are you talking about?"

"Well, sir," Fitztightly eased across the room to put a conspiratorial arm around his prince.

"The idea is for a little amateur dramatics during your forthcoming engagements."

He pointed to the wall chart where a flag marked "University of Neasden" was pinned to March 28th.

"So, during your speech about wind farms to the students of the former North Circular Polytechnic, a long-haired individual may well rush out at you with a cheese grater. He will immediately be overpowered by Inspector Trembling, who will be fully primed in advance."

"What *are* you talking about Fitztightly?"

"And then on June 13th at the Boothby Shoot, a Save the Pheasant saboteur will parachute into the woods shouting 'Meat is murder'. He too will be overpowered by Inspector Trembling, this time assisted by a squadron of SAS men under the command of Major General de la Derriere."

A shocked Charles sat down on one of his cousin's bamboo and rattan orthopaedic computer stools which instantly gave way, sending him sprawling onto the carpet.

"That's very good, sir," said Fitztightly. "I see you're getting into the spirit of it."

THE NEW GAME THAT'S SWEEPING THE NATION!

FANTASY GOVERNMENT

JUST choose your ideal cabinet to run the country, and see how they do!

For example, you might choose:

John Major (Captain)
Michael Howard
Tim Yeo
Margaret Beckett
Dennis Skinner
Mrs Thatcher
The Late Harold Macmillan
Ken Livingstone
Bernie Grant
Sir Richard Body

★ Each week the performance of your chosen political team is monitored and you score points as follows:

Dismal performance at Question Time 0 points
Pointless visit to Moscow 0 points
Love child –2 points
U turn on major policy –4 points
Appearance on Frost programme –10 points
Sneered at by Paxman on Newsnight –2 points
Praised by Paul Johnson in Mail –10 points
Found dead in women's clothing 0 points

Last week's winner:
JOHN MAJOR (–712 points)

A Manager writes

AS A manager, I am often asked by Mrs Bottomley: "How can we save lives, I mean money?"

The simple answer is to close down hospitals which are labour-intensive, cost-inefficient and which return no profit on investment.

What happens is that the hospital, or care unit processing centre to give it the full managerial name, is carefully selected from a hat and then closed down.

This operation has a 100% success rate and enables the manager to staunch the flow of money into the NHS and to cure the pain caused to Mrs Bottomley by non-paying care consumers — or 'patients' as they are known to laymen.

The manager is then advised to take at least two lucrative posts on other quangos per day.

If you are worried about the NHS, you are quite right.

© A Manager

EX-CHANCELLORS — INCREASE YOUR INCOME BY UP TO £300,000

Selected hasbeens can receive a welcome boost to their old age pension if they allow themselves to be featured in pathetic adverts for credit cards!

VSAD

AFTER THIS NO ONE CAN CALL ME EYEBROW!

THE DIARY OF BAD LUCK – HOW JOHN MAJOR'S NIGHTMARE UNFOLDED

Nov 28th 1990 John Major becomes Leader of Conservative Party.

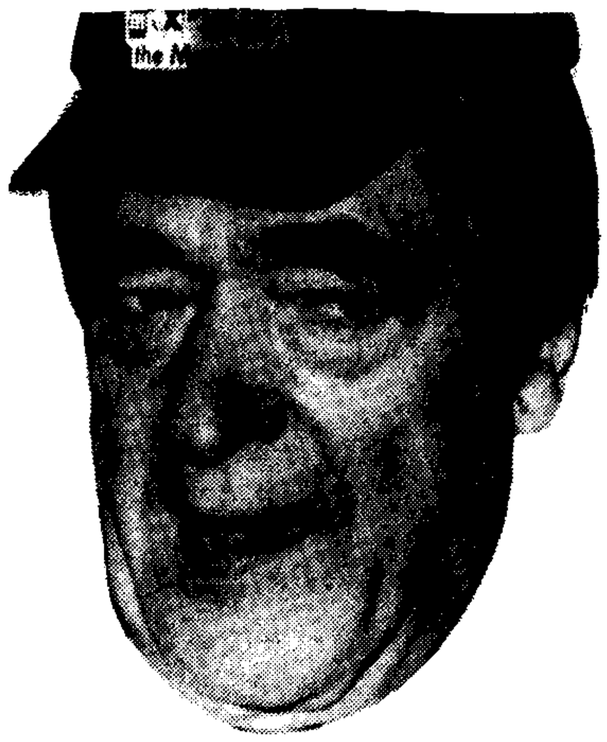
Nov 29th 1990 Everything goes wrong.

Nov 30th 1990 Er...That's it.

The Musical They Tried To Ban — And Did!

TERRIFIC CROOK

The Musical



Here they are — the hits you will never whistle...

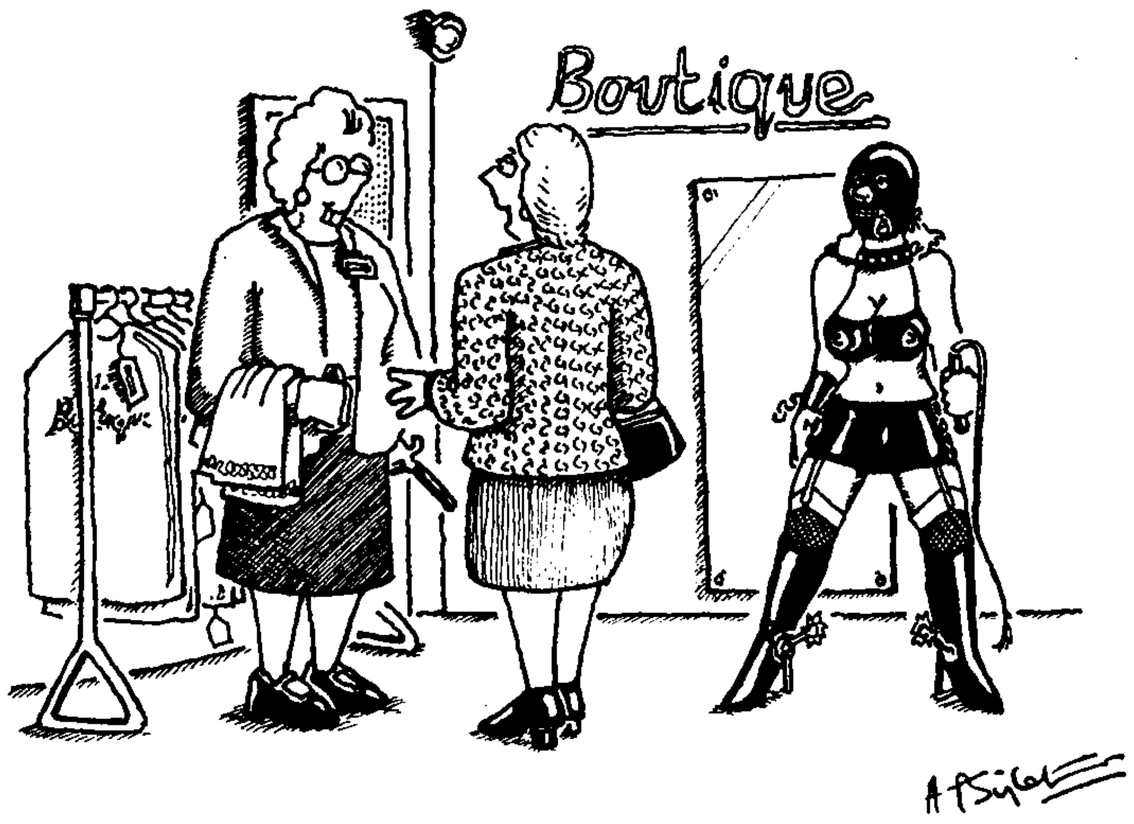
I Am The Very Model Of A Stupid Attorney-General

Trial Not By Jury

Complete Tit Willow

Two Little Boys Who Are Entirely Innocent Are We

and hundreds more awful songs which might have prejudiced any jury into thinking that Maxwell was a terrific crook.



"Do you have anything a little less Conservative?"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Wanstonia

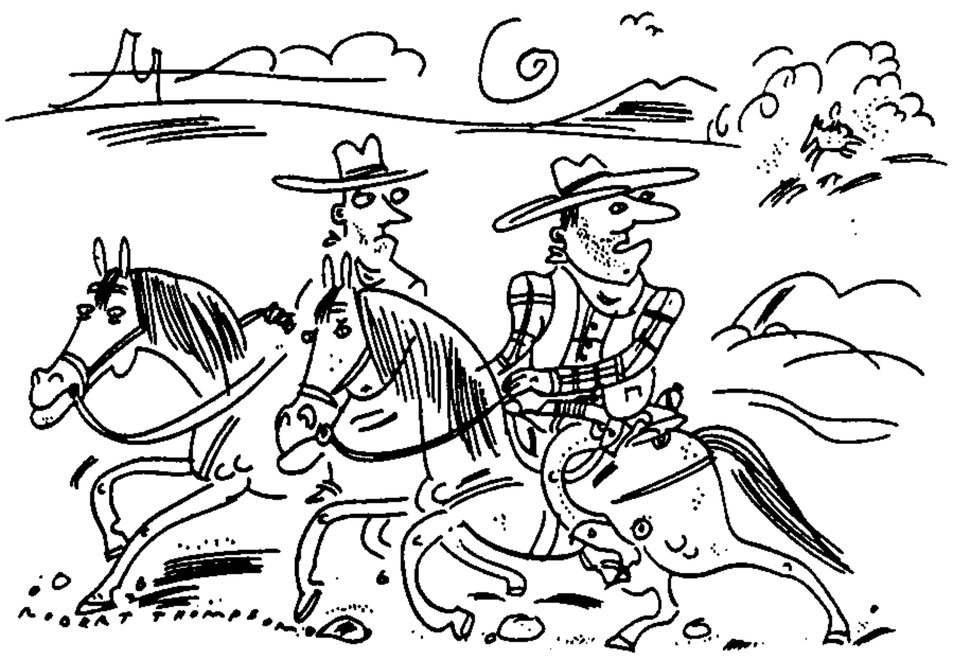
From Sir Herbert Gussett

SIR—I am sure that all true Englishmen will have been inspired by the gallant resistance shown by the people of Wanstonia to the Ministry of Transport's plan to demolish thousands of houses just to build some absurd motorway.

We ourselves in this corner of the West Country have not been immune to the assaults of that faceless army of little Hitlers and jumped-up jacks in office who have been so aptly named "the mad officials". Only last week, for instance, our local council announced without so much as a by-your-leave that the single parking bay in the village street, outside Mrs Puddephat's store, would in future be reserved only for disabled drivers. Is there no end to this unceasing tide of nonsense emanating from the crazed bureaucrats of Brussels?

But I have the honour to inform you, sir, that the people of Britain are fighting back, and that the gallant Wanstonians are no longer alone. At an emergency meeting of the 'No To Disabled Parking Action Group', it was unanimously voted that we would stage a mass sit-in, to send the signal to Brussels that, as far as disabled parking in this village is concerned, it is a question of "Ils Ne Parqueront Pas". The committee, consisting of Lt. Col. B. Frobisher and myself, then proceeded to barricade ourselves in the saloon bar of the Lamb & Flag, where we remained for several days, with the full support of mine host, Mr Montague Balon. Perhaps it was just as well that no bailiffs or council officials were foolish enough to attempt to end what will forever be remembered as the historic "Siege of the Lamb & Flag". For if they had done so, they might well have been given a bloody nose! Floreat Wanstonia.

Yours faithfully
H. GUSSETT
"Winstonia"
Randolph St Churchill
Dorset



"Can't seem to shake 'em off. It's either an Apache tracker or the Child Support Agency"

THAT THATCHER MEMO IN FULL

I, MARGARET HILDA THATCHER, Supreme Ruler of the Universe, do hereby grant you, President Mohammed Al Bakhanda of Malaysia, the sum of £234 billion and in return you hereby solemnly suggest that you might, if we're lucky, be interested in buying 49 Tornado Aircraft, 24 Hawk Trainers and 2 Frigates (slightly foxed). Though you may well change your mind.

Signed

Mark Thatcher

M. Al Bakhanda

M. Al Bakhanda

IT'S A MIRACLE

says Hole Victim

by Our Mountain Rescue Team
Peter Snow and Ben Nevis

A MAN who has been buried in a hole up to his neck for two years was still there yesterday.

"It is a miracle that I have survived so long," the man said, as he sank ever deeper into his hole.

Cairngormless

He is 50-year old John Major from Downing Street, London, who since April 1992 has been submerged under an avalanche of his own making.

Several times rescuers have tried to pull him out of the hole, but each time he has pulled them in with him.

"By all past experience," said one experienced hole-watcher, Kenneth Clarke, "he should be a goner. I would not like to be in his shoes. Or rather I would."

The Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

No. 94. A Service For The Procuration Of Increased Voluntary Giving From Reluctant Parishioners (After The Church of England's Huge Loss Resulting From Unfortunate Speculation In The Commercial Property Sector).

Prayer of Humble Access Card

Vicar: O Lord, as thou mayest have read in the Telegraph, thy church is sorely overstretched resource-wise. We pray that those gathered together here today may give generously towards my salary. Amen.

All: Er...

The Responses

Vicar: Lift up your money.

All: We lift it up unto you.

Vicar: O Lord, open thou their wallets.

All: And make thy chosen vicar joyful.

Vicar: Give money in our time, O Lord.

All: It is meat and drink, as far as our vicar is concerned.

Reading

And lo there was a certain poor priest, a servant of God, who was sore oppressed due to lack of funds. For the elders of the church used their talents foolishly and turned 300 million talents into none. And the poor priest turned unto his followers and said: "Come unto me all of ye who are heavy laden with money. And I will take it off ye. And if ye do not give it unto me, you will be cast into outer darkness, where there will be much wailing and gnashing of teeth." And, lo, they coughed up all that they hath, even an hundred fold.

This is the word of the Lord and don't you forget it.

Offertory Hymn

All coins bright and beautiful
All bank notes great or small
All cheques with a banker's card
The vicar takes them all.

During the singing of this hymn the churchwardens will pass through the congregation collecting money and threatening reprisals to all those who do not give generously.

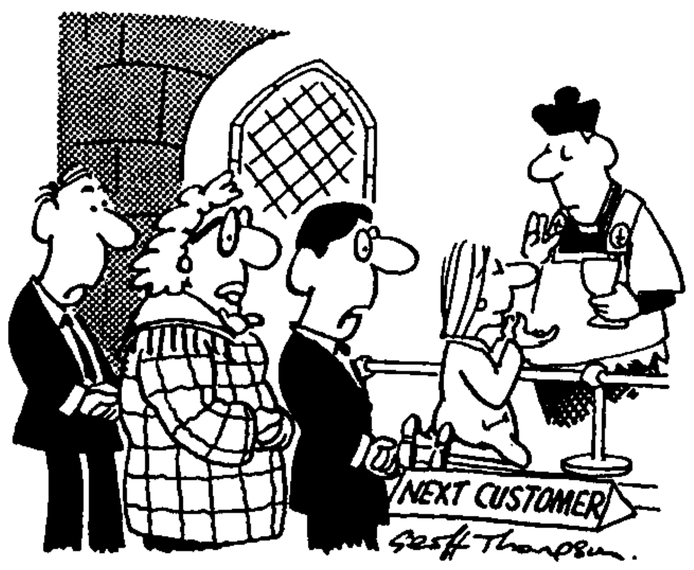
Vicar: The Lord giveth and the vicar taketh away.

All: Amex.

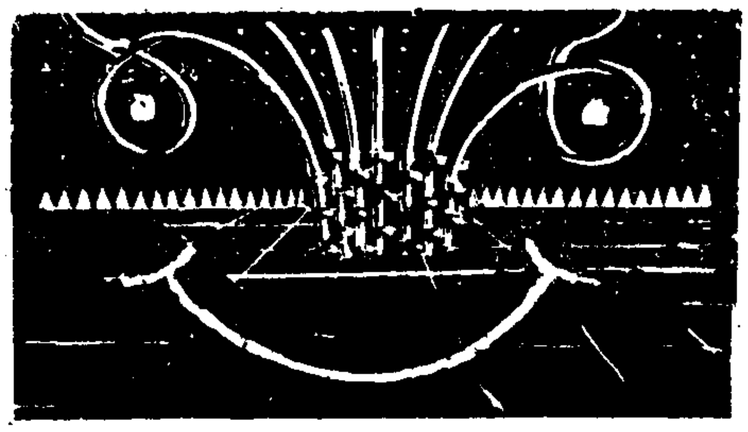
Vicar: That'll do nicely.

Organ plays Involuntary by S.S. Barclaycard.

© Archbishop Carey Street.



DIARY



MARINA WARNER

For the sixth in my series of Reith Lectures, 'Baring Banalities', I plan to tackle 'The Real Issue: Everything That's Ever Happened In The Past Ten Thousand Years'. The careful listener will note that my conclusion takes nearly half an hour to reach, but for those who persevere it is well worth the wait. It takes, I conclude, all sorts, and variety is the spice of life, though, on the one hand, more hands make light work, as Homer pointed out, and, on the other, in a profoundly Brechtain sense, too many cooks spoil the broth, while, looked at from a different angle, it's a funny old world, isn't it, but then, as Wittgenstein was among the first to notice, that's the way the cookie crumbles — or doesn't crumble, as the case may be.

I am certainly not advocating the mass destruction of all humankind. Far from it. That would be absurd, and not only absurd but morally reprehensible. In fact, the last thing I want is the mass destruction of all humankind, which to my mind is an over-ridingly 'male' idea. In fact, as novels from Jane Austen's *Emma* to Booker Prize winner Ben Okri's *Famished Road* have demonstrated so tellingly, every male has deep genocidal instincts, apart from those who do not. Rather, I am advocating a profound and important re-evaluation of our cultural and political preconceptions to incorporate the view from my road in Kentish Town, which is surely not too much to ask of anyone.

Never before has society been so indifferent to the pipe. Popeye the Sailor Man* is just one embodiment of male culture that intensifies one's sense of the hero as pipe-smoker, another being Sherlock Holmes, and another Sir John Harvey-Jones. Yet, despite all evidence to the contrary, there remains a culture of what one might term sublime apathy in our society towards the pipe. The ex-Prime Minister Harold Wilson was also a keen pipe-smoker, and many leading historians contend that Agamemnon** may well have smoked a pipe before setting off to do battle against Carthage. Many of our most memorable contemporary novels have been written by pipe-smokers — Malcolm Bradbury, Sir William Golding, Keri Hulme — and leading anthropologists have shown that in some African tribal societies the pipe is seen is a potent and living symbol for the reception and smoking of tobacco. In contemporary 'Westerns', native Americans are often portrayed smoking the pipe of peace, and many shops within our contemporary culture — particularly pipe shops — display nothing but pipes in their windows. One of the scientists in Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* smokes a pipe, so does one of the teachers in Paddy Clarke's Booker Prize-winning novel, *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*, and so too did the famous actor James Robertson Justice in *The Yellow Rolls Royce****

We live in a society — menacing, subdued, hopeful, hopeless, brave, cowardly, fat, thin, hot, cold, big, little — which is gradually awakening with some kind of seeping dread to the fearful dominance of the pipe and the evolving expectations that surround it. In California, two trained scientists***** observed a stationary pipe under clinical conditions. They placed it on a table two metres by two metres, left the room, and, through a peep-hole — *so that it had no idea that it was being observed* — they watched it, around the clock, for a full twenty-three days. Extraordinarily, their records show that, through a remarkable show of sheer willpower, *at no time whatsoever* did the pipe reveal any sign of movement, or, indeed of comprehension. Only when they removed it from its room, filled it with tobacco, ignited the tobacco, and began to puff did the pipe take on the normal attributes invested in it by society. Small wonder that society is, at the deepest level, so beguiled by this seemingly most innocent yet also most threatening of objects. Already, plaintive, accusatory signs are to be seen in restaurants: "Please refrain from smoking pipes as it may offend other diners". Only when we learn to smoke the pipe can we be sure that it will cease to smoke us. Never before has society been so obsessed with the pipe. Thank you. ****

One of the most potent myths in our hide-bound society lies in the overwhelming adulation afforded by the media to the myth of the well-spoken pretty soft-left female lapsed Catholic middlebrow. She has become as powerful, in her way, as Pegasus, Robocop, Billie Holiday or Kaspar Hauser, appearing at least once an hour on television and radio, perhaps because she offers to the producers a blueprint of idealised human nature, and, at a deeper, psychic level, instils in them a sort of deep reassurance, as she is freely available to hold forth on any topic at the drop of a hat without any form of "meaning" to get in the way******

John Lennon, Pericles, Song Lines, Clarissa, The Ozone Layer, Weston-Super-Mare, Dave Lee Travis, Gustav Holst, Mary Poppins, Dr Johnson, The Faerie Queene, Watergate, Colin Macinnes, The Home Improvements Act 1987, Rumpelstiltskin, The Berlin Wall, Stockhausen, The Virgin Mary, AIDS, Mahatma Gandhi, All Gas and Gaiters, the Beveridge Report, The Ring Cycle, Ring Around the Moon, Ring Lardner, Give Us A Ring, Goering, Gowing, Gonne — these topics, unrelated in so many ways, are in fact linked by one extraordinary, telling and ultimately overriding pertinent fact: I have just gathered them all in a single sentence, becoming, in all modesty, arguably the first woman in history ever so to do.

** see "Olive Oyl: Myth, Function and Reality" M. Warner, New Statesman, 6.10.72*

*** see "Memnon's Aga: Stylish Yet So Very User-Friendly", M. Warner, Food and Drink Magazine, 19.12.92.*

**** see "Yellow Cars in the Movies of the 50's and the Growth of a Pluralistic Society" M. Warner, Sight and Sound, 4.5.89.*

***** see "The Perennial Use Of Made-Up Scientists To Prop Up A Specious Argument and Other Essays" M. Warner, Parrot Press, 16.4.84.*

****** see "Footnotes Do Furnish an Essay" M. Warner, Interiors magazine, 13.8.88.*

******* for a more detailed account, see M. Warner's 5th Reith Lecture, "Marina: Myths Myth-managed and Mythtaken".*

JOHN BYRNE

JUST FANCY THAT

Daily Mirror Fantasy Football is easy to enter and it doesn't cost you any of those expensive phone calls and long waiting time on the line being operated by a certain other newspaper!

Daily Mirror 10.2.94

[illegible] if you are in line for a telephone bonus, you just have to call our special hotline.
HERE IS THE NUMBER TO CALL:
- FROM THE U.K.: 0[illegible]
- FROM [illegible] 10[illegible]

Daily Mirror 10.2.94

Do you believe that the National Curriculum should concerntrate on the basics? YES / NO

Streatham Hill Conservatives

AFLOAT

UMBRIA. 18C FARM HOUSE, restored to luxury standard. Sips 10 or 8 & 2 in sep apts. Large private pool, hilltop position.

Grauniad

Literary Review

Unhappiest daze of one's life

The Oxford Book of Schooldays
ed. Patricia Craig
(Oxford University Press, £17.95)

PUBLISHERS — problems with turnover? Authors — want to produce a big fat tome that will be largely reviewed without the trouble of having to write it? You do? Then there's a future for you as an anthologist.

Oxford, Faber, Chatto — they all do it. What's more, as a skim down the jacket of this one discloses, it's respectable. After all, John Mortimer did *The Oxford Book of Villains*, and you can't get more respectable than that.

What makes an anthology even more alluring to a prospective compiler with a London Library ticket and access to a photocopier is that there are some books which are almost infinitely usable. It doesn't matter whether your subject is provincial church architecture or the history of dress design, *David Copperfield* and *Middlemarch* will help. If some grotesque mischance were to destroy all know copies of *The Mill On The Floss*, a diligent scholar would probably be able to restore a version of the text from the extracts pillaged for the *Chatto Book of Goldfish* or the *Faber Book of Deep-Sea Diving*.

A good test of an anthology's merit is to forecast what's in it. The more you get right, the less likelihood there is of its being any good. Now, what would you expect to find in *The Oxford Book of Schooldays? Nicholas Nickleby*, P.G. Wodehouse's Mike and Psmith, Evelyn Waugh's Llanabba Castle and Kipling's *Stalky & Co.*, *I'd* say, and I'd be right. Oddly, though, what renders Patricia Craig's little effort a tiny bit less interesting than the average anthologist's bran-tub is not the predictability of the insertions, but the altogether startling nature of what has been left out.

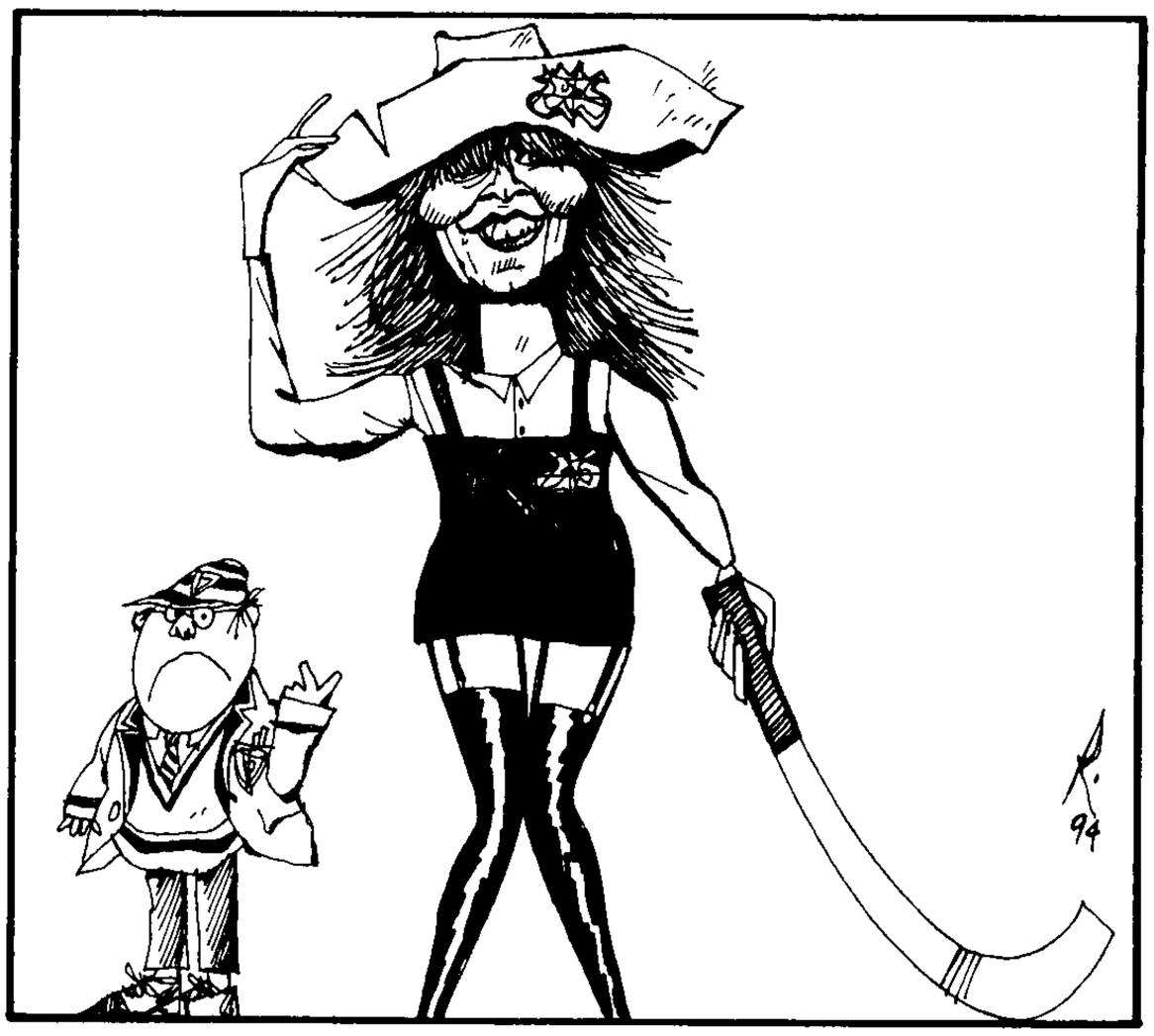
According to the introduction, Ms Craig has set out to provide "an overall picture of education in Britain". As a claim, this is quite breathtakingly off-beam. Never mind the reforms of the 19th century (and Arnold M., the school inspector, is probably better value than Arnold T. the headmaster of Rugby). Education here means mostly public-school education — a glance at the index reveals 18 extracts about Eton alone, leaving aside bits from books like the Anthony Powell novels where the place turns up incognito.

In her defence it can be argued that writing about the elementary school herberts is highly elusive, but there is Gissing (late 19th century), Walter Greenwood (early 20th), Maureen Duffy (1940s), not to mention Richard Llewellyn's epic account of the ascent of a coal miner's son in *How Green Was My Valley*. Ms Craig's discovery of Jack Common's novel *Kiddar's Luck*, set in inter-war Tyneside, was a bonus, but that and A.L. Rowse on the Cornish council schools don't really redress the balance.

Even within the cosy palisade of the boarding school, Ms Craig's touch is a mite unsure. Co-authorship of a study entitled *You're a Brick, Angela! A New Look at the Girl's Story* means that the book is crammed with fragments of Angela Brazil and the extraordinary Dorita Fairlie Bruce (a juicy extract in which the headgirl discovers a couple of juniors trying on a corset in the boiler room), but the swathes of similar books for boys produced over the first half of this century by writers like R.A.H. Goodyear and Harold Avery never get a look in. Instead, you get Betjeman's *Summoned By Bells*, and Winston Churchill's account — surely one of the most anthologised pieces in the whole of English literature — of how he was taught English at Harrow.

Of course, no reviewer of an anthology ever failed to give the impression that he or she could have done a better job than the anthologist, but for heaven's sake where, to take only the notable absentees, are Patrick Hamilton, Maurice Richardson's *Little Victims*, Orwell (typically Ms Craig includes the well-known essay on "Boys' Weeklies" but leaves out the seedy private schools of *A Clergyman's Daughter*), and Hugh Walpole's *Mr Perrin and Mr Traill*, not to mention the funniest novel about schoolteaching ever written, J.L. Carr's *The Harpole Report*? And what about the immortal Molesworth?

Just another Oxford anthology then: a fine, foaming bran-tub of a book into which, alas, repeated dips produce nothing but bran.



Books & Bookmen

☐ **SO CONVINCED was Eddie "McBastard" Bell that HarperCollins would be declared publisher of the year at the Nibbies that he reserved three tables for colleagues and authors.**

Immediately before the announcement, he ordered champagne all round and an extra big cigar for himself. The accolade then went for the second time to Transworld, HarperCollins never having won. What will Lady Thatcher think?

■ *THOSE in the know deny that Frostie was paid a paltry £15,000 for compering the Nibbies at the Park Lane Hilton. They insist he received £25,000.*

☐ HERE WE go again. Grim Steely Hatchetman's recent tour of the antipodes resulted in the axing of Michael Duffett, who had been Hodder & Stoughton's md in Australia and New Zealand for the last five years. He has been replaced by one of Hatchetman's chums, imported from Macmillan South Africa.

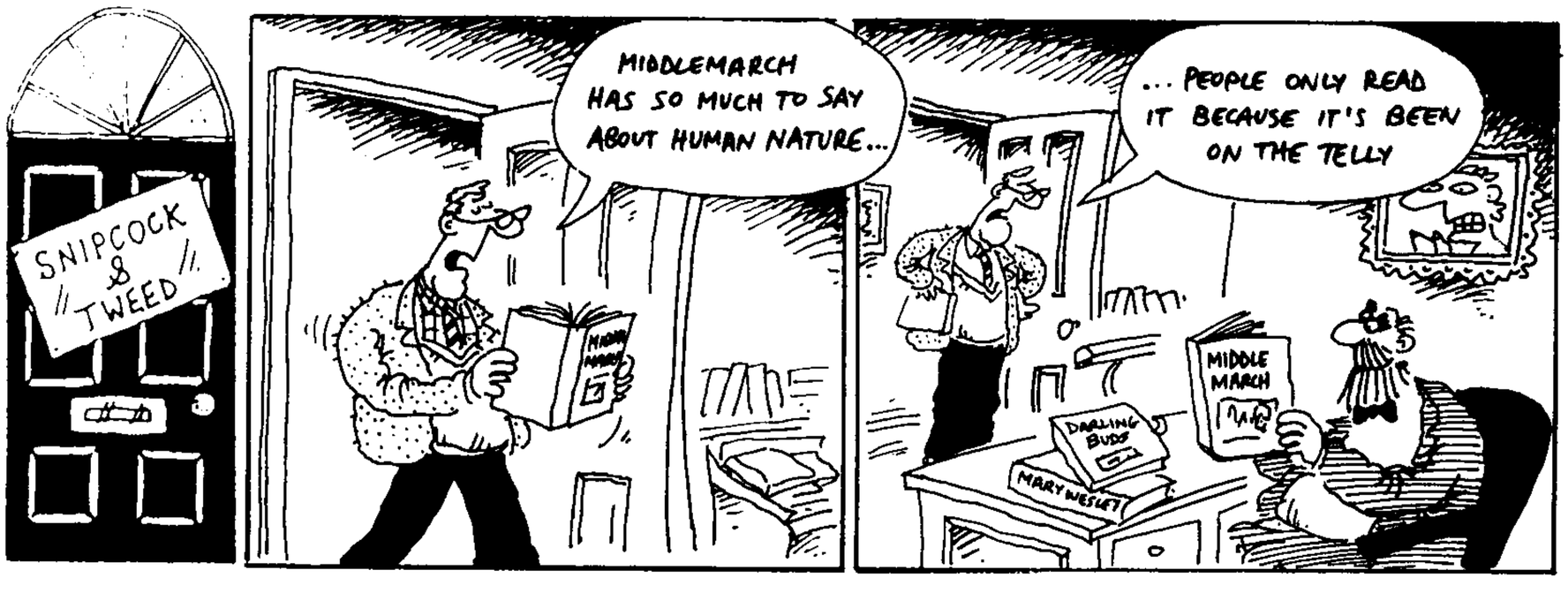
Back home, Grim has again been an active reaper. Stuart Hughes, the agreeable accountant brought in by the old Hodder management (the Attenbores) to replaced unqualified finance director Richard Morris, and the person generally credited with transforming Hodder's fortunes from a loss of £6 million into a respectable profit in two years, has been told his services are no longer required.

He has already departed. As virtually the last senior director of the pre-Hatchetpeople regime and yet another main board director with a three-year contract to July 1996, Grim will have to cough up lots more compensation.

Hodder Headline took a couple of tables at the Nibbies, but it was noticeable that the Hatchetman sat at a different table from Terry Waite, who was the guest of his editor, the highly respected John Curtis. Curtis has been publishing his own quality list with Hodder for some five years, and was gratified when agent Mark Lucas informed Curtis, a modest fellow, that Waite had chosen him to be his editor.

Unfortunately at the launch party for *Taken On Trust*, a dismal and highly inappropriate speech was made to the admiring guests — not by Curtis but by Grim's sidekick, Martin "Noddy" Neild. But what made Curtis go home and cry was when Grim dressed him down, saying he had blown the chance of making a further £100,000 on the book because it was underpriced and printed on too high quality, and thus expensive, paper. Tel has instructed his agent to look other than to Hodder Headline for his next book.

'Bookworm'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
MIDDLEMARCH HAS SO MUCH TO SAY ABOUT HUMAN NATURE...
... PEOPLE ONLY READ IT BECAUSE IT'S BEEN ON THE TELLY
MIDDLE MARCH
DARLING BUDS
MARY WESLEY

footnotes

Swindlers List

THERE WAS an embarrassing splurge of publicity when it was announced that about half a million people had been swindled in a multi-billion pound pension scam. But no one listed the politicians responsible: the Rt Hon Norman Fowler, chairman of the Tory party; the Rt Hon Anthony Newton, leader of the House of Commons; and the Rt Hon John Major, prime minister.

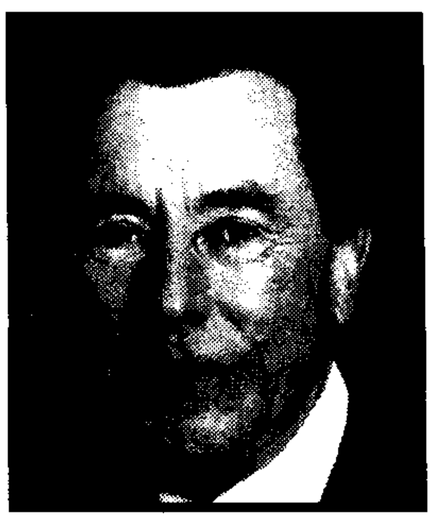
Soon after the huge Tory victory in 1983, a group of ardent Thatcherites, based at the Centre for Policy Studies and the new "independent" University of Buckingham, began a campaign to "free" the pensions industry.

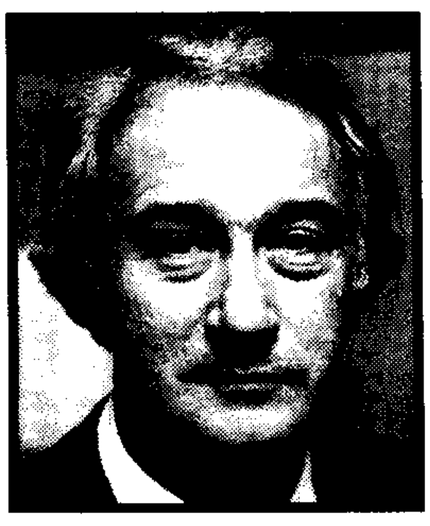
Prominent campaigners were Nigel Vinson, deputy chairman of Barclays Bank and for many years a director of the Centre for Policy Studies; and Philip Chappell, a director of Morgan Grenfell merchant bank.

A wunch of bankers

In pamphlets and papers and even a book, the bankers campaigned for "portable pensions for all". They declared it a fundamental individual freedom to own a personal pension free from the welfare state and free from the mushrooming pension schemes based in the workplace, which they denounced as "collectivist" and "crypto-socialist". They wanted everyone to be free to buy their own pensions from an insurance company, a building society — or a bank.

Their campaign was eagerly supported by Margaret Thatcher, who passed on her enthusiasm to her devoted secretary of state for social services, Norman Fowler. Soon after the 1983 election, he set up a "retirement" study group. Its members were chosen from a typically wide range. Alongside Fowler and his minister of state, Barney Heyhoe, sat Professor Alan Peacock, vice chancellor of the University of Buckingham; Mark Weinberg, the new chairman of Allied Dunbar Assurance, a large life assurance group; and Marshall Field, general manager of Phoenix Assurance.





THE FREE THREE: Vinson, Chappell, and Weinberg

This group took evidence from the Centre for Policy Studies, which recommended an immediate and drastic switch to private pensions, and the National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF), which was worried about the possible break-up of workplace schemes.

Derek Bandey, a pensions specialist who was chairman of the NAPF's parliamentary committee, tells the Eye. "I kept warning the government that there is more freedom, and more security in a fund managed by elected trustees than in private pensions managed by a bank or an insurance company."

When Fowler ignored these warnings and announced proposals for a new law to "free pensions", the NAPF was thoroughly alarmed. In September 1985, it declared: "It would be obdurate and shortsighted of the government to disregard the strength of feeling about the very real disruption that must follow if the proposals are implemented... We regret that the stability necessary to provide for the long-term retirement needs of the working population is now to be destroyed."

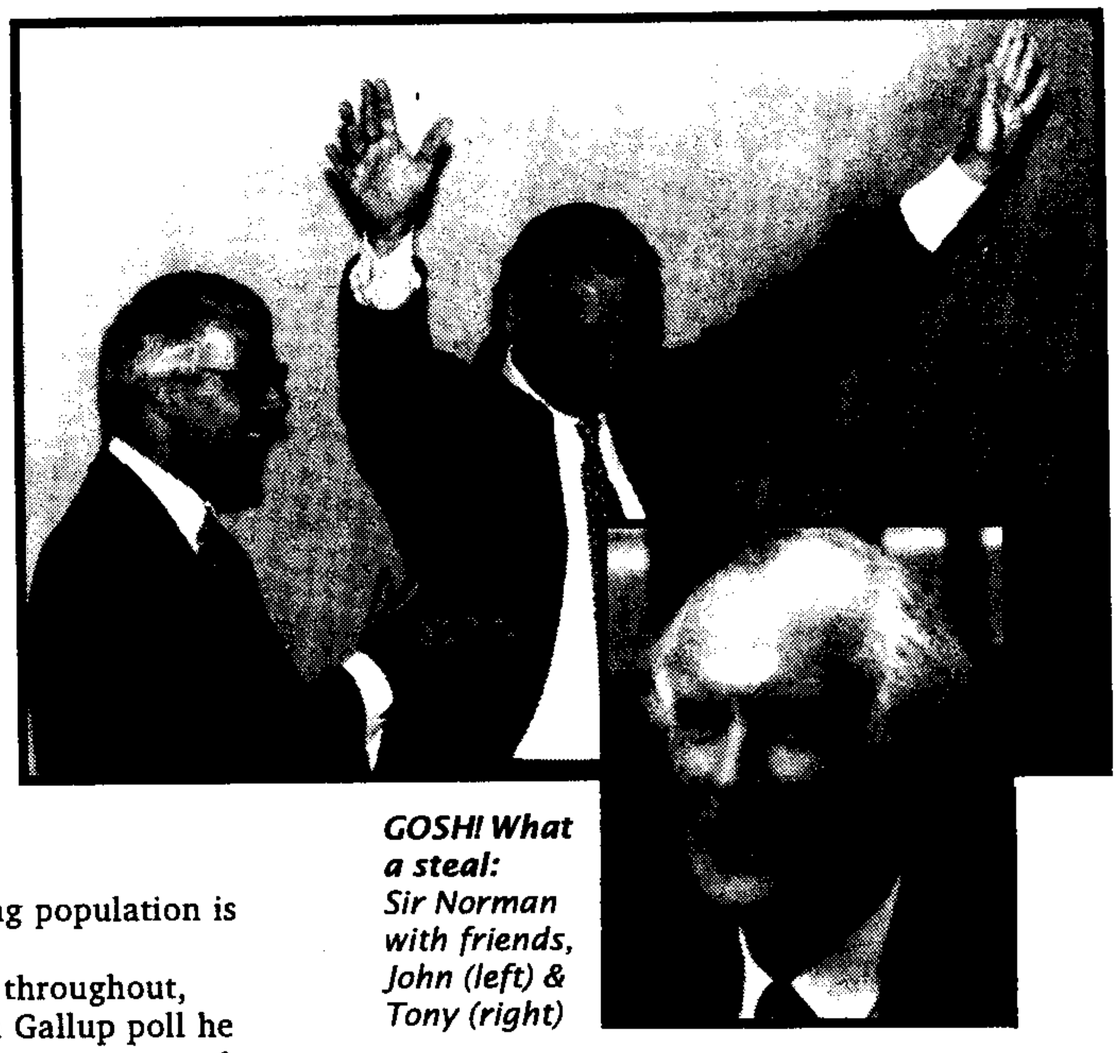
Obdurate and shortsighted throughout, Fowler took no notice. When a Gallup poll he commissioned suggested that not many people would leave their workplace pension schemes, he decided to bribe them. His social security bill offered an "incentive" — a 2 per cent rebate on national insurance contributions — to people who left their schemes and bought private pensions. "The individual", the secretary of state promised the Commons on 28 January 1986, "will have a splendid deal".

Derek Bandey was not impressed. "I told them their new bill was a cowboys' charter."

The new bill was the 1986 Social Security Act. To help get it through the Commons, Fowler had two new lieutenants: his minister of state Tony Newton; and his parliamentary under secretary, a former banker called John Major. From January to May 1986, these two took the bill through its standing committee. Again and again they brushed aside warnings about their cowboys' charter.

When Labour's Margaret Beckett said: "We are concerned about the unscrupulous overselling of personal pensions" (4 Feb 1986), Newton replied that people could always get advice from their bank managers. "I must say," he said, "that people have more confidence in their bank managers than in their MPs" (6 Feb).

John Major ridiculed the warning of Labour MP Michael Meacher that "many people will come out of the occupational schemes to their disadvantage" (11 Feb). When asked directly how many people would lose from new private pensions, Major replied: "The concept of turning this into a one-way, risk-free option is entirely alien" (18 Feb).



GOSH! What a steal: Sir Norman with friends, John (left) & Tony (right)

He promised safeguards, but when specific ones were demanded he turned them down. He turned down a statutory limit on commissions or administrative charges. Ill-briefed, bland, inflexible he stuck doggedly to his leader's "principle" that a "person can own his own pension".

Margaret Beckett snapped back angrily — and prophetically: "I have this vision of some outraged pensioners of the future coming to Mr Major's successor claiming that they cannot afford to eat and being told: 'At least your pension is your own' " (28 Jan).

Fowler and fouler

The bill had its third reading on 20 May 1986. Fowler trumpeted: "We are opening up the provision of pensions not just to life assurance companies but to building societies, banks and unit trusts."

The response from the City was electric. An army of hurriedly-trained salespeople, hungry for commission, swarmed round schools, pit villages and hospitals to flog private pensions. Miners, teachers and nurses were told they could opt out of their workplace pension schemes and pay less for a bigger pension.

The results were predictable. Between 1989 and 1992, at least half a million people transferred. In 1991 and 1992, as the recession bit, £5.5 billion worth of pension money went from relatively safe schemes to much riskier ones. For four years no one seemed to notice. Then last year the "regulators" (the Securities and Investment Board) finally stirred. They commissioned a report on 735 representative transfers.

Published last December at the modest price of £60, the 24-page report disclosed that only 9 per cent of these transfers showed "substantial compliance with the main conduct of business requirements". The remaining 91 per cent were judged either "unsatisfactory" (54 percent),

"suspect" (8 percent) or both (29 percent). "Suspect" was defined as "showing evidence of an apparently perverse recommendation, positive evidence of misselling or of playing on emotive issues" — in a word, *rip-off*.

In a private speech to pension fund experts recently, Paul Trickett, head of the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme, revealed that in the five years to September 1993, the scheme had paid transfer values totalling £736 million, well over 90 per cent of which went to personal pension plans. "I would argue," he said, "that the basis on which many people have been encouraged to transfer has been questionable and on many occasions I have been forced to wonder whether the advice to transfer might not be linked to the generation of commission."

He reckoned that £35 million had been swiped in commissions from the mineworkers' scheme alone. He named the top five beneficiaries of transfers from his scheme: the Trustee Savings Bank, privatised by Thatcher; Pearl Assurance; the Prudential; Britannic Assurance; and Legal & General, which raised its contribution to the Tory party in 1992 from £28,000 to £40,000.

Who else did well? Nigel Vinson got his peerage and Marshall Field his CBE in 1985, the year of their pensions triumph. Mark Weinberg and Professor Peacock were knighted in 1987. But the most startling promotion of all came to the ministers who made the swindle possible.

In 1990 Norman Fowler left the cabinet with his knighthood to spend more time with his wallet. A few months later, the young banker he groomed during those gruelling standing committee sessions on the "freeing of pensions" was in 10 Downing Street. Sir Norman was called back from the City to renew the old partnership. The Great Pensions Triumvirate was completed when Newton was made leader of the House. Prompt government action to repair the pensions damage is not expected.

Derek Bandey, now retired, tells the *Eye*: "I can remember saying to ministers during the passage of the bill that this would be the greatest rip-off of all time. I take no comfort in having been proved right."

BARKING MoD

■ THE ministry of defence has come up with the perfect private accountancy firm to check all its (top secret) accounts: Price Waterhouse, heroes of the BCCI scandal.

PW was chosen "after an open competition" with the ministry's own auditors, who have been doing the job perfectly well up to now but haven't produced a penny profit for anyone in the City.

THE BRIDGEWATER CASE

The Barefoot Confessor

■ MORE EVIDENCE has gone to the home office about the violent habits of John Perkins, the detective constable who extracted from Pat Molloy a confession to the killing of newsboy Carl Bridgewater.

The confession was the lynch pin of the prosecution case. Molloy insisted it was false and had been beaten out of him by DC Perkins. But Molloy died in 1981 before he could tell his story to the court of appeal.

Perkins, who has also since died, was disciplined in 1987 for fabricating evidence. In February last year, the then home secretary Kenneth Clarke turned down a further appeal into the Bridgewater case. His office argued that there were eight years between the alleged fabrication of Molloy's confession and Perkins's fabrication in 1987. It concluded: "The home secretary does not consider that Perkins's misconduct at this much later date provides of itself a sufficient reason to doubt the propriety of any actions by Perkins in the Bridgewater investigation". The home office also insisted: "Molloy was treated properly at all times."

Barry Steele of Walsall has now written to Molloy's lawyers about an incident much closer in time to Molloy's alleged beating. He says that in 1983 he was interviewed in Willenhall police station by Perkins about an armed robbery in which a security guard was killed. Steele had taken part in the robbery, and says he has no animosity about the truth being beaten out of him. But his letter tells us how Perkins treated his suspects.

"The interview was rough going to say the least," says Mr Steele. "All my clothes had been removed for forensic tests and I was wearing only a pair of women's trousers and a large yellow blouse. Perkins was standing on my bare feet and holding me in a grip of iron while I was thumped from behind. I suffered this treatment for a short time and it produced the desired result and I reluctantly made a written statement.

"Perkins wanted to write it for me, but I done it myself with a little prompting from him... Later that night I was interviewed again by Perkins. This time he wrote a statement which at first I blankly refused to sign but after being told I would be getting a little bit of what I got earlier and strong verbal threats I quailed and signed up."

Butler did it — *again*

IN HIS evidence to Lord Justice Scott's Iraqgate inquiry, cabinet secretary Sir Robin Butler boasted about "one of the great strengths of our system" — the ability to "find out what happened" from the documents provided by the civil service.

Here are two examples.

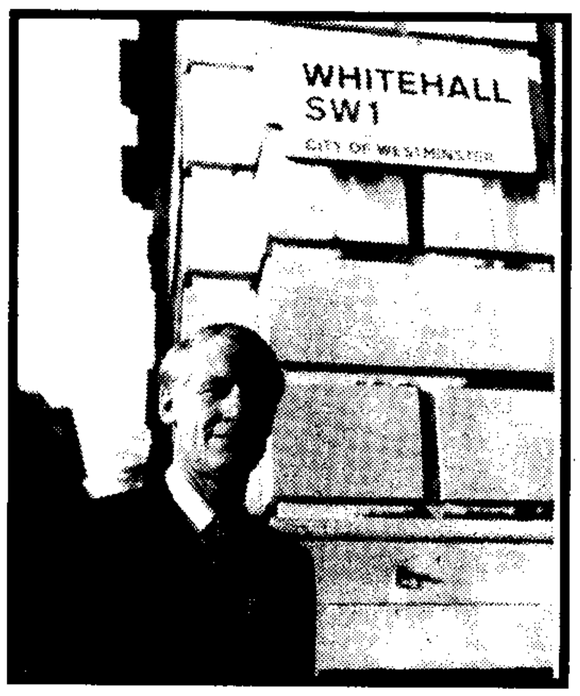
1) In 1989, Roger Harding and Bob Primrose, senior intelligence/MoD officials, were warned that the supergun being built in the Midlands was destined for Iraq. No one did anything about it for six months, when trade secretary Nicholas Ridley said that no one in government had ever heard of the gun.

When MPs on the trade and industry select commitee asked to interview Primrose and Harding, they were told that their "appearance would be inappropriate".

Why? Because, said the ministry of defence, both had "retired" (rather early) and therefore did not have access to the relevant papers.

The "relevant papers" excuse was dropped by Sir Robin when he gave evidence to Scott. He said it was simply "the convention" that retired civil servants did not appear before select committees. "I was not asked to advise, I remember, whether they should be given access to the papers or not." No document was provided by anyone to reveal who was right: the MoD in 1992 or Sir Robin Butler in 1994 or — most probably — neither.

2) Former Tory MP Sir Hal Miller told Scott that he met Butler on 24 April 1990 to explain how he had known about supergun since 1988, and had told the MoD, the DTI and



the security services all about it. At the meeting, according to Miller, Butler insisted there were no government documents to prove that Miller had spoken to anyone in the government about supergun.

At the select committee 18 months later, John Meadway, head of overseas trade at the DTI, was asked about Miller's approach to his department. He replied: "There is no DTI record. That is certainly one of the problems this case has thrown up."

Meticulous Sir Robin must have felt. He must also have been absolutely delighted that neither Lord Justice Scott nor Presiley Baxendale QC asked him a single question about his meeting with Sir Hal.

PS: Before drafting his whinge about the press, Sir Robin said, he had consulted Sir David Gillmore. Sir David was high commissioner in Malaysia from 1983 to 1986, during which time cables from his high commission were rushing back and forth to the foreign office about the case of Lorrain Osman.

Osman claims he was held in a British jail unconvicted for eight years because the Malaysian government didn't want him to blab in open court about the Bank Bumiputra. The bank was formed to boost the funds of the ruling party in Malaysia and to make loans to associated companies, including Carrian, which went bust.

GRAFTING JAQUISS

GENERALE des Eaux, an ambitious French company, is seeking to expand into newly-privatised areas in Britain like water and hospitals.

It already owns four water companies (Three Valleys, North Surrey, Tendring and Folkestone) and is planning a big push into private medical care through its subsidiary, General Health Care.

To boost future building contracts with the new, susceptible hospital trusts, the company has appointed an energetic consultant, Michael Jaquiss, and installed him in the London offices of its construction subsidiary, Woolf.

It is to be hoped that Mr Jaquiss has better luck than he had with his last employer, the construction company Speyhawk, for whom he managed an expensive project called Thames Valley Park.

He hadn't been there very long when questions were raised by British Rail about some invoices. The questions led to Mr Jaquiss' arrest in October 1987 and his conviction for fraud in July 1988. After hearing the clearest possible evidence that he had helped himself to about £180,000 of someone else's money, Mr Jaquiss changed his plea to guilty. Judge Norwood sent him to prison for three and a half years.

Mr Jaquiss was even shown to have forged his driving licence (to pretend he was two years younger). At Speyhawk he acquired the unusual nickname, Jake the Fake.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 071 287 3183

In the City

CLEARLY, the battle for control of the ailing Newspaper Publishing and its dull, almost unto death, titles the *Independent* and its Sunday sister is the talk of Lugano, the capital of that part of Italy which believes in keeping its money in tax-free Switzerland.

How else to explain why, one day early this month, Signor Carlo Pagani, a reputed investor cum arbitrageur, woke up with the burning desire to spend £1,750,000 on acquiring a 500,000 share stake at exactly the same price as had just been paid by would-be new owner Tony O'Reilly? Especially as at 350p, any investor has to be looking north of 360p to realise any profit after dealing and carrying costs.

But then Pagani is not just any investor. For in the battle for the wallets and votes of the uncommitted 28 percent of Newspaper Publishing, every share counts and Pagani now just happens to own 2.375 percent — enough to put the Mirror Group Newspapers-led consortium within less than 1 percent — or 150,000 shares — of control.

Not, of course, that Pagani is in any way committed to the consortium where MGN's most loyal ally is Italian Carlo de Benedetti's newspaper group. So much so that it is suggested de Benedetti may have made a significant investment in MGN itself and, with his Spanish partners, be prepared to act as almost nominees for MGN if the consortium wins.

Pagani has made it clear that he, like the newspapers in which he is now a shareholder, is independent. But then a cynic might say, he would, wouldn't he, given the Takeover Panel rules about concert parties and the no doubt coincidental fact that he paid the same price as the consortium's revised bid. A true Boesky-style "arb" would want a much higher price to tempt him in — or an alternative guaranteed profitable 'out'.

Doubtless in such circumstances the O'Reilly camp will be keen to be assured that Pagani had no contact with any member of the consortium prior to diving into the market and that he has no arrangements which would ensure that his strategic stake is committed to them. Similar questions may also be raised by the independent directors of Newspaper Publishing who are determined, it seems, to do everything to thwart MGN.

How O'Reilly reacts to the new consortium bid may become clear before the Newspaper Publishing board meets this week. It is believed he has already lined up several allies who would be prepared to come in as shareholders if he wins and so enable the media magnate wannabe to keep management control with a maximum 30 percent stake.

He is also expected to have a deal with Lord Stevens' United Newspapers for the publishing. And there are those who suggest that a deal may also be on the cards with the *Guardian* for a new jointly-owned company to acquire the *Sindie* and merge it with the *Observer* in order to close the O'Reilly Sunday. Such a deal would be an ironic reversal of the fate the overly ambitious but under equipped Andreas Whittam Smith planned for the *Observer*.

But first O'Reilly has to win. Pending a monopolies reference which would seemingly kill off the consortium, this may require a new offer nearer the 400p mark at which the institutions and the Europeans could emerge at a profit and knock him over in the rush for the door.

FUGITIVE Asil Nadir is said to have run into problems in his much trumpeted bid to sue the British authorities over the Polly Peck investigation. The Nadir plan is to sue in the British courts, alleging abuse of process and prosecutorial misconduct, as well as in Strasbourg with the European Court of Human Rights. To date neither legal move has been made.

Last month Nadir's lawyer went to Strasbourg for a preliminary meeting with court officials. He was told that Nadir might need to put up a substantial amount in costs to bring the case, perhaps as much as $2 million. This financial hurdle could present a problem, even with the $500,000 Nadir obtained from Turkish Cypriot pensioners.

More worrying, though, was the lack of enthusiasm expressed by court officials for the basis of the Nadir case — that he had been denied justice by not being tried within a year of his arrest and by the refusal of the SFO to hand over documents for his defence.

It was pointed out that the pre-trial proceedings had begun within a year of his arrest in December 1990 and that a trial date had been set but that he had then fled and so terminated the proceedings in May last year. As to the documents, the SFO had offered Nadir copies with the originals to be available at trial. It looks unlikely Nadir will receive any more sympathetic reception in Strasbourg than he will in the British courts where it is considered most unlikely the judges will entertain applications from a fugitive.

Nadir's best shot could well be simply to return voluntarily and take the SFO on claiming that — à la Birmingham Six policemen and, musical or no musical, the brothers Maxwell — that it is impossible to obtain a fair trial.

IT EMERGES that the private detective employed by the *Independent*'s intrepid investigator Tim "Tintin" Kelsey to discover personal information about two SFO police officers is a campaigner against the improper obtaining of confidential information from police sources by unscrupulous private detectives!

Gary Murray, of Euro-Tec, assisted Duncan Campbell and the BBC to expose abuses of the police national computer and other supposedly confidential sources of information such as criminal and personal records. Murray called for government action to stop the snoopers. His evidence helped to convict three police officers and five private detectives in 1989 for breaching the official secrets act by peddling criminal records data. More recently, Murray returned to the fray with a book on similar abuses.

Clearly the ideal man for "Tintin" and the not so *Independent* to recruit to attempt, using pretext calls, to obtain the dates of birth of police officers in order to corroborate alleged perjury concerning the SFO investigation of the much maligned Nadir.

INVESTORS tempted by this week's flotation of litigation prone cheapo record company Tring International would do well to ponder the involvement of a man who is only there in the small print of the prospectus — Paul Levinson.

Tring is the fourth time round for Levinson in building up and selling on a business. The track record shows that it is always better to be a seller than a buyer when dealing with the man in the Tring shadows.

In 1973 Levinson sold the Parnolds chemist chain to Booker McConnell for £500,000. Within a year Levinson was gone and the business was making big losses. By 1983 Levinson was into and out of videos selling the Video Form chain to Gerald Ronson for £8 million. The Parnolds pattern was soon repeated, but this time in double quick time. He closed Video Form in 1986 with accumulated losses of £9 million.

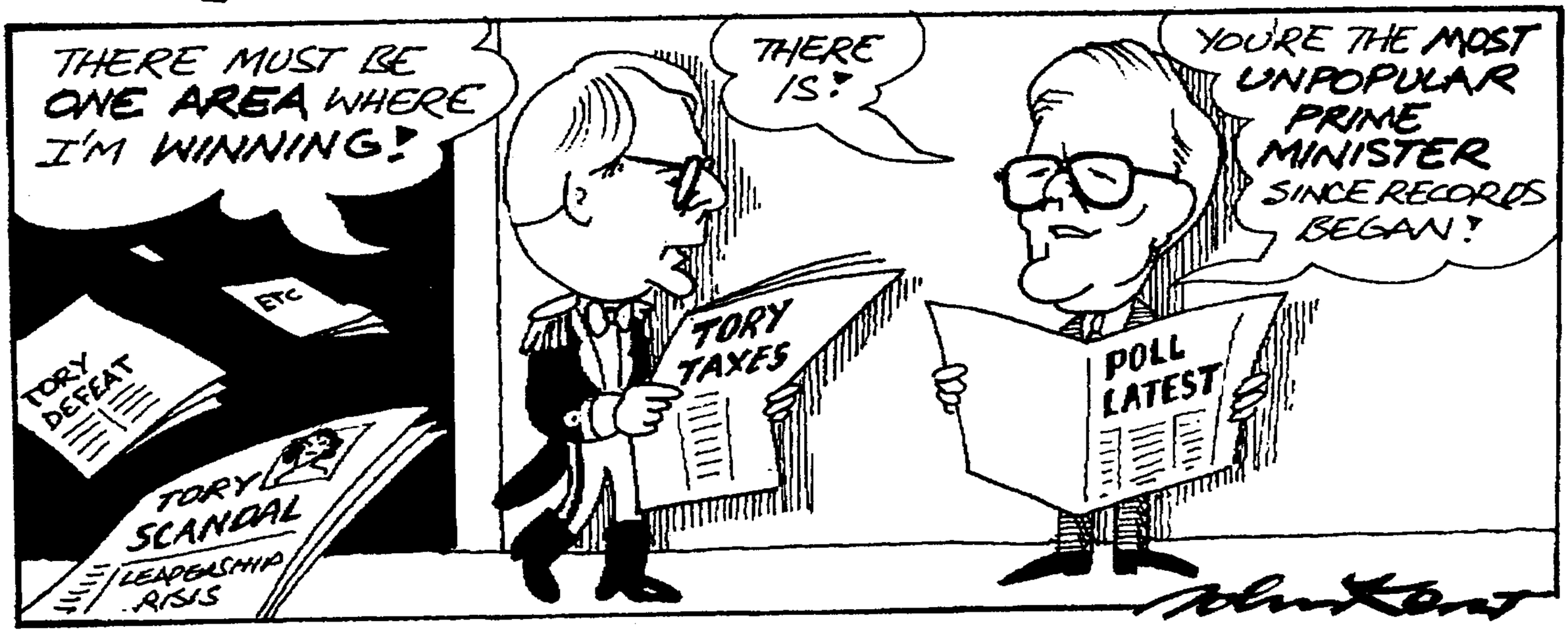
Levinson by then was running the listed Prestwich Holdings into which a new video business had been injected. Three years later Levinson's offshore trusts received just over £8 million when Prestwich was the target of a management buyout. As part of the deal Levinson had to take away one of the video businesses he had put in for £1 plus bank debts of £7 million-plus.

It was while running Prestwich that Levinson met Tring founders Mark Frey and Philip Robinson and acquired their business selling cheap cassettes. After the MBO Levinson agreed to back their new venture which also featured his son Mark. The Levinson interests became major shareholders in what is now Tring.

As part of the flotation the Levinson interests have already sold about 9,500,000 of their 15,300,000 shares in Tring, realising more than £11 million. They still hold a stake worth £6,500,000, until next year.

With the litigation overhanging Tring from rival record companies and the Levinson track record it would hardly be surprising if the Levinsons are not material shareholders after that time is up. A word other shareholders would do well to be wise to, if they want to risk investing at all.

'Slicker'



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Interview with Robin Day, Observer magazine

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REPLYING TO BOX NUMBERS

Only one reply — Send your reply in a stamped addressed envelope to Private EyeSmalls (address above) and mark the box number clearly on the front of the envelope.

More than one reply — Put each reply in an unstamped envelope, seal it and mark the relevant box number clearly on the front of each envelope. Then put them all in a larger stamped envelope addressed to Private Eye Smalls (address above).

Your reply is then forwarded by us to the advertiser.

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE, 5ft 7in, non-smoker, 30, fun-loving and caring, seeks goodlooking tall solvent male for sincere relationship. Photo appreciated. Box 8140.

KIND VIRILE MALE (44), yoni worshipper, seeks deity for mutual pleasure. Box 8240.

ECLECTIC HACK, blonde, slim, late 30s, needs clever, artistic, leggy male, 30s/40s. Hot on expressive, but not corporate, powers? Succulent, sweet and sophisticated? Box 4739.

DIANE KEATON desperately sought by London Marathon male, 30. Box 7640.

ATTRACTIVE warm black female barrister, 30s, soh, seeks interesting professional solvent English gentleman 30-50s for cultural exchange, travel, friendship — maybe more. Photo appreciated. Box 7740.

SARAH PARKIN seriously bored by Jonathon Porritt, would like to meet reasonably sane single man with goals, ethics etc, but also time for her. 30-55. Photo preferred. Box 7840.

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NIPPLE FANCIER professional male, 35) seeks female with sense of adventure for uncomplicated afternoon fun in Leeds area. Box 5940.

STUNNING WITTY GRADUATE, prof. fem., seeks equally charming erudite tall man 28/35 for affectionate friendship. Solvent arty cynics welcome. Likewise godless theatricals. Photo and amusing letter please. Box 6040.

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UPMARKET intelligent female, 37, blonde, wants to enjoy relaxed conviviality with tall solvent single male non-smoker. North-West. Box 6440.

NAVIGATOR required by female (46, non-smoker) for walks, art, theatre (all three?). Must enjoy conversation. M54 and beyond. Box 6540.

MAN, 35, tall, slim-ish, fair, some education, SW London etc, seeks female company for paid, prize exotic holiday August. Photo, letter and more are musts. ASAP. Box 6640.

TALL, SLIM, intelligent married man, 40, own hair/teeth, seeks NS woman 25-45 for part-time friendship/romance and, let's be honest, legover. Dry soh and interest in films, travel, books and cycling will help conversationally. Living in London, Surrey, Kent, or, at a pinch, Essex, would help the logistics. Box 6740.

GENTLEMAN, 41, young, professional, usual attributes, Virgo moon in Aquarius, would like the company of an elegant, sophisticated lady to enjoy the pleasures of a discreet, sensual affair. City nights, distant weekends, business travel. London. Box 6840.

BOXERSHORTED male 28 seeks stockingclad older woman. Box 6940.

ARE YOU an attractive married lady, always busy, with lots of interests but an overquiet sex life? Sensitive, discreet, professional male, 39, would like to hear from you. South, West. Box 7040.

MALE, early 30s, would love to meet a romantic, caring female who likes a laugh. Location unimportant if you are her. Photo appreciated, one of yourself preferred. Box 7140.

NON-BUMPTIOUS BARRISTER, tall, good-looking, butch, clever, culturally unchallenged and witty (this ad submitted by a friend — he would be too modest to admit), wants a beautiful, very intelligent, funny and politically uncorrect girlfriend. Box 1940.

ATTACHED, attractive, professional man, 30s, seeking an attached attractive lady for extremely discreet illicit love affair with no strings, London/Home Counties. Box 2040.

TOYBOY, 30, handsome Indian professional, seeks discreet liaisons/friendship with older attractive female. London. Box 2140.

FEMALE GRADUATE, 29, seeks warm, happy, Guardian-reading man (n/s) for cinema, theatre. Kent/London. Box 2240.

TALL PROFESSIONAL MAN, 44, seeks witty, attractive female friend for mutual loving kindness (London). Box 2340.

INTERESTING LETTERS fascinate wise Westcountrywoman who is poised to respond. Box 2440.

OXON businessman, 28, single but attached, seeks dowager in shining armour for medieval romp, possibly leading to life-long surrender of realm. Mature, wicked and stateswoman-like preferred, blushing Valkyries need not apply. Box 2540.

DOES YOUR BRA size end in D, DD, or E? Then this successful writer/ musician would love to offer discreet awe and admiration! Box 2640.

WANTED: successful older gentleman who enjoys lavish lifestyle, for discreet affair with exciting slim female. Free to travel. Box 2740.

ATTRACTIVE professional woman (45) seeks kind warm unattached non-smoking brainy hat-trick types, 35-55. South-west. Photo please. Box 2840.

MARRIED MAN seeks attractive female to "get back to basics". Discretion assured. Box 2940.

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LONELY SOULFUL lady singer seeks dissolute war-crazed soldier for romance and erotic adventure. Must be single 20-40 and know his own mind. Overseas replies welcome. Box 10040.

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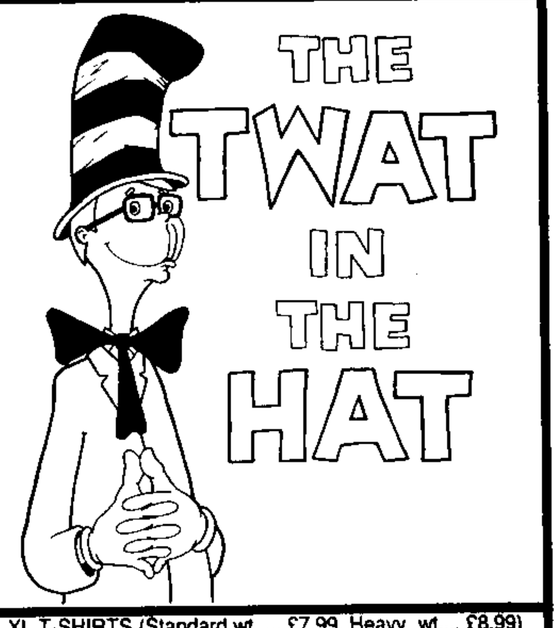

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SCORPIO FEMALE, mid 40s, into Chablis and concerts, Pavarotti and passion, seeks similar, like-minded male, 40-50, boring wimps need not apply. Ring 0660 209553

INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLER wants companion under 45, kind and caring. Ring 0660 205318

FEMALE, ATTACHED, EARLY 30S, very attractive with good figure. Seeking tall, good looking man, 30-40, gsoh, to put the sparkle back into my life. Ring 0660 207617

LADY, 50, CAPRICORN, honest, caring, smokes, social drinker, gsoh. Seeking solvent, sociable male, looks unimportant, gsoh is a must for friendship/companionship. Lancashire. Ring 0660 205141

KIND, EASYGOING, romantic guy, 28, own successful business. You are intelligent, feminine, witty, adventurous and enjoy life, and want someone who respects you for whom you are. Ring 0660 205219

BLACK FEMALE, 24, attractive, slim, intelligent, humorous, lovely personality. Seeks attractive, intelligent, humorous, solvent male, 27-40, for serious longterm relationship. Ring 0660 207655

TALL, SINGLE, CARING, creative male, classical music journalist, 30s, seeks vivacious, intelligent female, 20s, for concerts, conversation and conviviality. Ring 0660 207701

FEMALE, 32, attractive, educated, n/s, brunette, seeks professional, non-clubbing, fit, male version of same for whatever develops. Ring number to hear more. Ring 0660 209581

MAN WITH DOG seeks woman for walkies Ring 0660 209558

DESPERATE MAN WANTED, with gsoh, for tone deaf miopic karaoke queen! Come on baby light my fire! Ring 0660 209694

ARTS ORIENTED MAN, 37, 6ft, slim, fit, intelligent, witty, dark haired and handsome, seeks special, affectionate, attractive lady for friendship, outings and Valentine times. Hampstead. Ring 0660 205034

ATTRACTIVE, ENERGETIC, fit, slim, mid 40s woman, sensual. Conventional appearance but rebellious within. Loves the sea, arts, travel, romantic times. Looking for friend and lover. Ring 0660 205129

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MALE, 32, 5ft 11in, slim, white, attractive, educated, nice flat/car, easygoing, unpretentious, fun loving, seeks female, any age/race, for whatever develops. Ring 0660 209201

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GOOD LOOKING, successful, slim, graduate man, gsoh, into theatre, blues, films, sport, books, seeks very attractive, bright, sensual woman, 30 plus, for lasting, loving, fun relationship. Ring 0660 205177

TALL, SLIM FEMALE, 44, white, seeks company of 6ft plus, slim/medium build, well groomed, n/s, white male, with gsoh, own teeth and hair. Ring 0660 208452

ATTRACTIVE professional woman, 38, non smoker, South London based, interested in arts, food/wine, travel. Lots of love on offer, looking for similar man. Ring 0660 205227

WITTY AND ATTRACTIVE, tall single male, seeks tall, slim, mixed doubles partner, 25-36ish, for longterm friendship and first service. Ring 0660 209678

PRETTY, SLIM, intelligent young lady, who loves music, loves to dance and loves to travel, is looking for kind romantic man for friendship and romance. Ring 0660 208539

GENTLE, KIND man, 40, handsome, slim, confident, interesting life, fun to be with, seeks sensitive, bright, bubbly woman with gsoh, slim, 28 to 40. Ring 0660 205035

WANTED : Thinking woman's thinking man, for tea, empathy, maybe nothing else. Oxford, West London. Ring 0660 206511

MARRIED WHITE MALE, 30s, tall, handsome, fit, gsoh, seeks platonic female companion, 25 to 50, non smoker, fit, interested in countryside, walking, hiking, horse riding, etc. Surrey/S London area, any nationality. Ring 0660 208866

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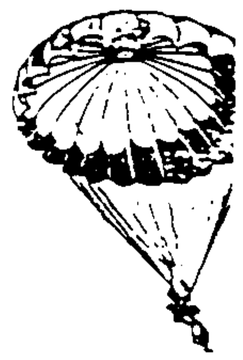

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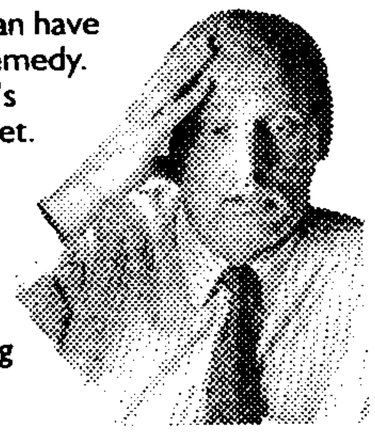

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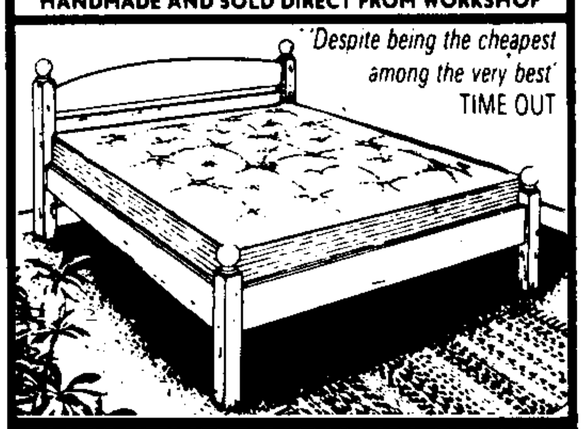

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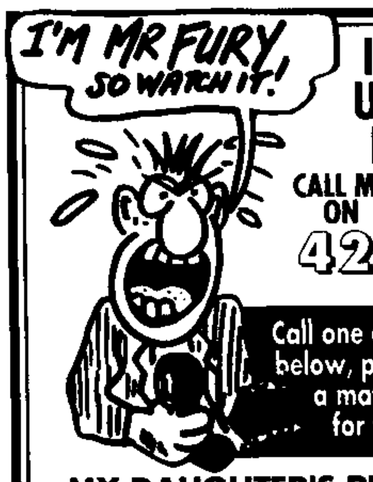

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